

ONCE A WEEK.

AN

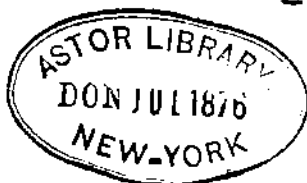
Illustrated Miscellany

OF

LITERATURE, ART, SCIENCE, & POPULAR INFORMATION.

VOLUME III.

June
JULY TO DECEMBER, 1860.



LONDON :

BRADBURY & EVANS, 11, BOUVERIE STREET.

[The Right of translating Articles from "ONCE A WEEK" is reserved by the Authors.]

11,
309,
Exeter, E.

PAIR and I
Famous of
Faristan

THE HERBERTS OF ELFDALE.

A STORY IN SIX CHAPTERS.

BY MRS. CROWE,

Author of "Susan Hopley," "The Night-Side of Nature," &c., &c.



CHAPTER V.

I WAS married on the day that had been previously fixed for the wedding, and Clara believed that she had married the man who had for three months been winning her affections by the most assiduous attentions; but alas! she was mistaken. I was transformed. I was just as eager to make her my wife, or rather, I should say, I was just as unable to bear the thought of losing her, and I think I should have been capable of shooting any man who had attempted to rob me of her. But that last look of my father's had poisoned my cup of bliss; that indescribable look of horror had chilled the marrow in my bones; it had cast a pall over the present and the future; filled my soul with terrible forebodings of I know not what misfortune, and though I spurned the thought of being deterred from fulfilling my engagement, I was a coward acting a part. Everything was acting, even my tenderness for Clara was acting, for a new element had sprung up and mingled with my love—hatred born of suspicion. Sus-

picion of what? I did not know; I could fix upon nothing; but there it was, a cormorant keeping itself alive by feeding greedily on every word, look, and action of my affianced bride and her relatives. Day and night I asked myself why they had been so ready to receive me on a footing of intimacy at first,—why they had been so eager for the match, and why they had never insisted on my father's being consulted even in regard to the settlements. I was now first struck by the extraordinary co-incidence of their taking up their abode under the same roof as myself. I had hitherto thought it a lucky chance; now I believed it to be deep design—a plot—a conspiracy to entrap me; but what could be their object? Young, beautiful, well-born, for although she was not the daughter of Sir Ralph, she was his niece, and not ill-dowered, what need was there of plots or conspiracies to get her married? I had no title, nor was my estate so large as to excite the cupidity of a family like the Wellwoods. But the more impossible it was to find any probable motive

for their ready reception of my suit, except the simple one that they liked me, and approved of the alliance, the more I sought for some occult and sinister one. My father's strange behaviour, the absolute solitude in which he lived, the mystery of my mother's disappearance and death, his irreconcilable hatred to the Wellwoods—which I had hitherto attributed to some ordinary source of quarrel between neighbours, embittered by my father's ungenial character and temperament: these, and other half-forgotten trifles, coloured by the lurid light of that death-bed scene, I was eternally brooding on.

No doubt a great change was visible in my character and demeanour; but this was naturally attributed to the sudden catastrophe that had occurred. In compliance with continental customs, the funeral took place earlier than it would in England; and immediately after our marriage, which was quite private, I started for Elfdale with my bride, my presence there being necessary. Our original plan had been to travel southward, and spend the winter at Rome, where Lady Wellwood and Sir Ralph had promised to join us. It seemed possible enough to fulfil this engagement still, and we spoke of it as probable; but I confess to privately feeling a disinclination to carry out the arrangement. Their presence had become a restraint and an annoyance to me. I wanted leisure to brood over my aspirations, for morbid suspicion, like morbid jealousy, "grows by what it feeds on!" the germ, once planted, it fell on such congenial soil, that it spread and spread till it had quite mastered me.

Poor Clara must have found it a dull journey; however, it came to an end, and we arrived at Elfdale. She was struck with the beauty of the grounds—a gloomy beauty it is true; but even I, whether, because my taste was developed by time and travel, or whether because it was now my own, could not but acknowledge it.

"I had no idea the country was so picturesque," said Clara. "I almost wonder my uncle could live entirely away from it for so many years."

"Ah," said I, "did you ever understand why he did so?"

"No," she answered, "it never struck me to inquire. You know I had never been here since my infancy, and though I had a recollection of being lifted up to kiss a little boy over the wall, and of the storm that ensued, which was perhaps, what impressed the circumstance on my memory, I had not the slightest recollection of the place, and of course had no desire to return to it. My uncle said it did not agree with him."

"There cannot be a more healthy situation," I said. "It is high and dry, and yet not bleak."

"Still, you say, you would not like to live here yourself."

"Well, no; I have got accustomed to continental life, and—"

"But your father did not live here, either, for many years before he died," she said suddenly, as if the circumstance had just struck her. "It's odd everybody should leave it. It must be unhealthy, surely!"

"No, Clara," I said, "I believe it's healthy enough; but I fancy that your uncle's and my

father's dislike to this part of the country arose from the same source."

"Indeed!" she said, looking up innocently; "and what was that?"

"Ah!" I answered, "that is what I do not know—I wish I did."

"Why? Is there any mystery about it?" she asked.

"There may be," I said. "But did you never hear your uncle allude to the feud that existed betwixt the two families?"

"Feud? No; I knew that he disliked your father; and after your first visit, Lady Wellwood told me the dislike was mutual, and she rather wondered at your seeking our acquaintance. Then we found you were not on very good terms with your father yourself, and so we never named him. Afterwards, when you began to pay me attention, I said to her, 'But I'm afraid, Mr. Herbert would not like George to marry me?'"

"And what did she answer?"

"Oh!" she said, "We've nothing to do with that. He's quite independent of his father, and, of course, I did not think it necessary to be more scrupulous than she was," she added, smiling on me affectionately. I could not smile; but Clara was too unsuspicious to put anything but the most favourable construction on my behaviour; and thinking I was merely suffering from some regrets connected with my father's death, she made an effort to turn the conversation into another channel.

My father had kept no establishment at Elfdale. Within the house there were only the housekeeper, and two or three women to assist her—strangers to me. Out of doors, there were the gardeners, the gamekeeper, and the people at the lodge—all equally strange, with the exception of Phibbs, whom, notwithstanding the ill name he bore amongst his own class, had always retained his place. He knew his business thoroughly, and, either from honesty or policy, had contrived to secure one voice on his side, and make it his master's interest to keep him.

The prejudice against him was founded on the slight foundations I have alluded to before, and I shared them from the reasons mentioned; but those were rougher times than these, especially in our part of the country. Killing a man in fair fight was looked on as a very venial crime, and would have excited no unfavourable feeling; but the source of the quarrel and the story of the pike were not forgotten, and the man's character and deportment were well calculated to keep alive the recollection. As a child, I had dreaded and hated him, and I had determined he should not remain a day in the place after I had power to dismiss him. I do not know whether it is the case with all children, but I know, for my own part, I had retained in my heart a fund of resentment against every one who had treated me with harshness and injustice.

After breakfast, on the morning after our arrival, while Clara was settling matters with the housekeeper, I took my hat and strolled into the garden. It was not long before I found him: he was stooping over a flower-bed, digging up the tubers; and, although he must have heard my

foot on the gravel, he preserved his attitude and let me approach without raising his head. I think he wished it to appear that he had not observed me, in order that he might see in what tone I addressed him before he spoke; for the last time I was at Elfdale—that is, before I went abroad—I had refused to acknowledge his salutations when he touched his hat, and had shown him, as far as I then dared, that I had not forgotten the past.

I stood now beside him for some seconds, enjoying his embarrassment; and then, finding I continued silent, he lifted up his head and showed me his face—and what a face it was! I remembered it well in its prime, colour and all—I had plenty of reason to do so.

He had been originally a good-looking man: he must have been a sort of rustic Adonis, with ruddy complexion, blue eyes, prominent but good teeth, and light brown hair that curled stiffly and set as close to his head as a negro's wool. He was tall, and not ill made, except that his figure was marred by his very high shoulders. I believe that the expression of his features must always have been disagreeable—of course it was so to me, because I feared him: now, it was what the country people called *awful*. I said to myself, "Yea, he must have murdered the girl!" His complexion was ghastly, too—not pallid, but much worse; the ruddy hue had changed to a livid faded crimson; the lower jaw had fallen considerably, and the lips were so drawn across the projecting teeth, that his mouth looked like the mouth of a skeleton. I was really taken aback, and stood silently staring at him, while he, after slightly touching his hat, waited for me to speak first. He saw that he was encountering an enemy, and paused to see in what form the enmity would be manifested.

"So you are here still," I said, at length, drily.

"Yea, sir."

"There is no other man or woman on the estate, I suppose, that I know?"

I think he had a presentiment of the turn the conversation was about to take, for while he answered "No, sir," in a sort of dogged tone, I saw a spasm cross his face.

"How many men have you in the garden?"

"Four, sir, besides myself."

"Is Goring amongst them?" said I.

He tried to look at me as he answered that he was not; but his eyes fell in spite of himself.

"Where is he?" I asked.

"Dead, sir."

"Dead, is he?" I said, looking at him inquiringly.

"I suppose you know he is," he returned, sullenly. "You've been here since that. It was an accident; he mought ha' killed me."

"It was in fair fight, was it?"

"Nobody ever said it warn't."

"But how came Matty, the dairy-maid, in the pond? That's what I never have been able to make out."

"Nor nobody else," he said, with tolerable firmness; for he was prepared for the question, and had often been called upon to answer it.

"There is something yet to be discovered upon that point," I said, significantly. "A young girl

on the eve of a good marriage wouldn't have thrown herself into the water—somebody must have thrown her in; but who?"

Here, as if weary of the conversation, he stooped and began putting together the tubers that were lying on the ground at his feet.

"Was anybody jealous of her?" I continued. "Did anybody else want to marry her, do you think?"

He must have heard the subject discussed hundreds of times, no doubt; but I am sure he remembered the scene at the dairy-door, when Matty purchased my immunity by a concession, and he suspected that I remembered it too.

"Well, sir," he said, as steadily as he could, raising his head for a moment, but continuing to pick up his tubers, "mayhap there may have been them as liked the girl, but a man can't always get the girl he fancies; but as for her getting into the pond, she war o'er fond of standing on the edge and feeding the fish; and most like her feet slipt from under her; and that's what the coroner said when he gave his verdict."

"But that's not what Goring thought, though!" I answered sharply.

He raised himself from his stooping position, and, looking me in the face, said, "Goring wer' a fool! Human natur's human natur' all the world over." And then with a peculiar look and tone he added: "Them as lives in glass houses shouldn't throw stones, I've heard say."

This was a home thrust, and I felt it; it was addressed to me pointedly, and my mind instantly reverted to the mystery that perplexed me. This man had been long in my father's service. If there was a secret he might know it; but I had declared war and had irritated him. He had bit me in his own defence. I had intended, after letting him see that I did not forget the past, to terminate the interview by dismissing him contemptuously then and there from my service, but now I wished to alter my plan, so I turned away, saying, "I don't see the application of your proverb, Mr. Phibbs." But we cannot deceive our adversary in this sort of skirmishing; we may try to conceal our wound, but the enemy knows when he has made a bit. I walked on, feeling vexed and defeated, and presently he passed me with his tubers in a basket.

"You'll soon be housing your things for the winter, I suppose?" I said carelessly, wishing to conceal my discomfiture; but I had better have said nothing. He saw his advantage, and lifting his eye confidently to my face, he answered, "Yea, sir; we must look for cold weather now, and I'm going to take in all the tender plants. Perhaps you'd like to see the hothouses."

"Annter time, Phibbs," I said; but this short dialogue was the acknowledgment of a treaty of peace, after a sharp conflict, in which I had been worsted.

He knows something, I said to myself. From him I may learn what I dread to know, but which, till I do, I never can rest. I must make him speak—probably he only needs to be questioned—and I walked on with my eyes on the ground and lost in thought.

When I reached the house, Benoit said that

Mrs. Herbert was in her room, and desired to see me as soon as I came in. I ascended the stairs slowly and unwillingly, for I never approached Clara now without an indescribable repugnance. The revolution in my feelings was altogether unaccountable to myself. I found her in her dressing-room, and her first words on entering were, "Oh, George, come with me!" and, rising from her seat, she led me out of the room.

"What's the matter?" I said. "Where do you want me to go?"

"I've something to show you," she said, as she eagerly ascended the stairs to the upper storey.

"What—up in the garrets?" I exclaimed. "What took you up there?"

"I've been all over the house since breakfast," she said.

"Well, and what have you found?"

She did not answer, for we were by this time at the end of the ascent. Instead of speaking, she led me into an attic which was used as a lumber-room, and, advancing, she pointed to a large picture from which she had previously unripped the canvas with which it had been covered. "Look," she said, "that's the portrait of my mother, George!"



I stared at her, dumb with amazement. "Yes," she continued, "is it not strange to find it here?"

"Why?" said I, rather to gain time than because I wanted an answer.

"Well," she said, "you know I never saw my parents, and I never could get my uncle to tell me anything about them. He always turned it off when I wanted to ask him, and as I saw that, for some reason, it was a disagreeable subject, I ceased to recur to it. But after his death Lady Wellwood was looking into a casket which he always kept in his own possession. It was the very casket that was lost on the night we reached Paris, you know. Well, I happened to enter the room suddenly, and saw her with a small picture

in her hand. She tried to hide it, but as I pressed her to tell me who it was, she said Sir Ralph had told her that it was the portrait of my mother. I asked her to give it me at once, but she said, as we were hurriedly packing up for the journey to Paris, she would leave it where it was for the present. And most provokingly it was lost!"

I think I should have fallen to the ground, but I supported myself against the wall, and by a strong effort, I forced myself to ask her why she thought this was intended to represent the same person.

"Oh," she said, with her eyes still fixed upon the picture, so that she did not observe the agitation and dismay that I was conscious my coun-

tenance must have betrayed—"oh, I recognised it directly; the other is an exact copy of this in little, even to the music-book and the name;" and as she spoke she pointed to the corner of the picture where there was a music-book lying on the ground, on the open leaf of which was inscribed in legible characters, *Rose Callender*. "And," she continued, "you know it was after her I was christened Rose, though I am always called Clara, because that was my grandmother's name, old Lady Wellwood. But the strange thing is, that we should find the original picture here. However, I'll have it brought down to the dining-room, and—"

But I could hear no more. I turned my back to avoid her eye, and descended the stairs with tottering steps to the library, where, after shutting myself up for a short time in order to reflect on my situation, my resolution was formed. I wrote a few lines to Clara, saying that circumstances beyond my control obliged me to leave her for a time; that I earnestly requested, and even commanded her, as far as she acknowledged my authority to command, that she would not seek to penetrate the motive of my absence, begging her at the same time to make herself as happy as she could during its continuance.

That very hour I quitted Elfdale, and, proceeding to London, made arrangements with a confidential agent there, whom I had been introduced to by my father when I came of age; and, from that day, I became a wanderer on the face of the earth, leaving my wife in possession of the estate, and ample funds to maintain a suitable establishment.

The unhappiness of my father and mother, the interview I had witnessed in the park betwixt the latter and Sir Ralph Wellwood, her subsequent disappearance, the universal silence regarding her, the abandonment of the neighbourhood which had necessarily become odious to both families, Clara's utter ignorance with respect to her parentage, my father's solemn injunction, and that last look of horror, all were explained! The dread secret was revealed; the curse had fallen upon me.

CHAPTER VI.

AND now for the story. Rose Callender was the orphan daughter of a poor clergyman, who died while she was at the school where, having lost her mother very early, she was placed for education; and where, being left perfectly destitute, she remained subsequently in the capacity of teacher. It happened that the vicar of our parish had known something of her father, and having two little girls of his own, who needed more superintendence than their mother was willing to bestow on them, he offered her a liberal salary if she would undertake the office, and give them the first rudiments of education.

She accepted the proposal, and whilst in that situation became acquainted with the family at Staughton. The old baronet, Sir Lawrence, grandfather to the young Sir Ralph, introduced to the reader in the last chapter, was then alive and in possession of the estate. Sir Ralph, the father of the lad, and husband of Lady Wellwood, was his only boy, and when home from school or college

used to be sent to read with the vicar, and thus had many opportunities of seeing Rose, with whom, as was natural, he fell desperately in love. Whether this love ever ripened into a positive engagement, I am unable to say; but there is every reason to believe that it was reciprocated with more or less ardour by the poor orphan. But Sir Lawrence was not a man to hear of such an alliance; he had himself, late in life, married the daughter of an earl, and he expected no less a match for his son. No suspicion, therefore, was entertained in regard to the young governess, of whom the old gentleman heard little and saw less, being wholly confined to his arm-chair by gout and rheumatism, and general declining health.

Nevertheless, there was one member of the family, besides young Ralph, with whom Rose was on terms of intimacy, and she it was who had brought them together. This was his cousin, Emily Wellwood, the daughter of a spendthrift captain in the line, who was then abroad with his regiment, and so overwhelmed with debt that he was never likely to return. The girl was therefore dependent on Sir Lawrence; who, when his health failed, and his wife was dead, sent for her to Staughton to nurse him. This young lady was neither very handsome, nor, indeed, very juvenile, for though her father was the younger brother of the baronet, he had married while almost a boy. She was, therefore, much older than Ralph, in spite of which disadvantage she thought it by no means impossible that by good management she might become his wife. Poor and dependent, proud and ambitious, unscrupulous and clever, she considered the enterprise not very difficult, if once Sir Lawrence was out of the way; but she was too well acquainted with his character and intentions to risk anything by a premature betrayal of her scheme.

Rose Callender's arrival in the neighbourhood, and Ralph's evident admiration disturbed and alarmed her; and, of course, generated a secret enmity which she was much too wise to disclose. On the contrary, she disguised it under an assumed cordiality, while she assiduously cultivated her intimacy and encouraged her confidence.

Affairs were in this position when my father, Reginald Herbert, who had been absent with his regiment, returned to Elfdale. He had not long before come into possession of the estate, and was intending to sell out of the service; indeed, he had given notice at the Horse Guards of his wish to retire. Naturally, his first visit was to his nearest neighbour, Sir Lawrence; but it happened that the baronet, who had passed a bad night, was still in bed, and Miss Wellwood received him. She had been aware that he was expected, and had seen how his arrival might possibly promote her views. Accordingly, she took an early opportunity of directing the conversation to the vicarage, and announcing the appearance there of one of the most beautiful creatures she had ever beheld—she could afford to praise her now, for young Ralph was absent at college—amiable and accomplished too, in the highest degree; but when Colonel Herbert said, smilingly, that he should take care to see this *rara avis*, she shook her head and answered; "you had better not; for you'll fall

in love with her beyond a doubt—everybody does—my cousin amongst the rest.”

“But how does that please Sir Lawrence?” said his father.

“Oh,” she replied, “I don’t think they are actually engaged yet; and as for my uncle, he knows nothing about it. But I see clearly that as soon as Ralph is his own master—and it can’t be very long before that happens—he’ll propose for her directly.”

From curiosity, partly to see the future Lady Wellwood, and partly to see the young beauty, my father made an early visit to the vicarage, and the picture I have described was painted to commemorate that first interview, which decided the fate of both. He fell in love; and she, after a short struggle, accepted his suit. Colonel Herbert was a handsome man and a gallant officer: Ralph was only just out of his teens; possibly therefore the superior attractions of the last lover effaced the impression made by the first; but besides this, the one was a certainty, the other an uncertainty; and the vicar, aware how utterly dependent Rose was, urgently enforced the duty of not rejecting such an unexceptionable offer.

Everything was arranged for the marriage which was to take place, for especial reasons, at the earliest possible period. But ere even that period had arrived, the American War broke out, my father’s regiment was ordered to take the field, and he, unwilling to risk his reputation by retiring from the service at such a crisis, gave notice at the Horse Guards of his intention to join, which he did; but not till he had made Rose Callender his own by sealing their vows at the altar.

Immediately after the ceremony, the bride and bridegroom proceeded to London, where Colonel Herbert’s presence was necessary previous to his departure for the seat of war. Rose remained with her husband till the day of embarkation, and then took up her residence at Elfdale to await his return.

Besides the two principals, there were three other persons materially affected by this marriage; first, Miss Wellwood, who triumphed in the success of her scheme; secondly, young Ralph, who was frantic at the loss of his mistress; and, thirdly, old Mrs. Herbert, my awful grandmother, who was furious at her son’s espousing an obscure, portionless beauty. On the death of her husband she had quitted Elfdale, and retired to a small estate of her own in Devonshire. Her family resided there, and she had a notion that her native air was more congenial to her constitution. On my father’s arrival in England, after an absence of some years with his regiment, he had hastened to see her, and had expressed a wish that she would return to Elfdale and live with him. As the attachment between them was very strong, she had consented, and she was deliberately making preparations for her removal, when the unwelcome news of the marriage reached her; for willing to escape an opposition to which he was determined not to yield, he had kept his secret till opposition was impossible. Far from lending her countenance to the unwelcome intruder, she would at once have retracted her promise and have remained where she was, had my father not

earnestly requested her to come and be the protector and companion of his young wife during his absence. Unhappily to this request she acceded; and never were two human beings brought together less capable of understanding each other. To great discrepancies of character and age was added, on my grandmother’s side, the strongest prejudice against what she considered the penniless brat who, with nothing but a pretty face, had artfully contrived to entrap her son into a hasty marriage, and intrude herself into one of the oldest families in the county. Rose’s aversion probably only dated from the first interview; but even from my own recollections, I can easily comprehend it, and fully appreciate her situation.

However, no permanent evil might have resulted from this unfortunate conjunction, had not a train of circumstances arisen that placed my mother in the power of her enemies—that is, circumstances that, from her own imprudence and inexperience, exposed her to suspicions which my grandmother was too ready to adopt; and which certain persons found it their interest to feed and encourage. Arrived at Elfdale, Mrs. Herbert senior at once assumed the command; Mrs. Herbert junior was nobody; and as the ill will of the old lady to her daughter-in-law was no secret, it may be easily inferred that poor Rose had more foes than friends amongst the servants and dependants. The love passages betwixt her and young Sir Ralph had not escaped their observation, and were now made the most of; even Miss Wellwood, envious of her beauty and, perhaps, unconsciously jealous of the very advancement to which she herself had contributed, was her covert enemy, though her avowed friend.

Nine months after the marriage, I made my appearance in the world to the great joy of my mother, who, pleasingly engrossed with her baby, became henceforth more independent of other society. Indeed, she had none but Miss Wellwood, for Elfdale had no near neighbours but the Staughton family and the vicarage; and the vicar having obtained preferment, was replaced by a stranger. However, Emily Wellwood, who accommodated herself to both, was a welcome visitor to my grandmother as well as to my mother. The latter really entertained a regard for her, and believed herself the object of a corresponding sentiment. Perhaps some little remains of tenderness towards her first young love was the source of this friendship on the part of Rose, for their characters must have always been utterly discrepant. However this may be, they lived on terms of considerable intimacy, inasmuch that when I was about two years old, my mother observing Miss Wellwood to be in great trouble, thought herself entitled to invite her confidence, the result of which invitation was a very unexpected confession. According to her own statement of the case, the one which my mother of course accepted, she, Emily, had long secretly loved her cousin Ralph; but perceiving no corresponding attachment on his part, she had carefully concealed her sentiments; but when, after Rose’s marriage, the young man had fallen into low spirits, she being his only confidante and consoler, he had gradually grown to look on her with

affection; the unhappy consequence of which was, that an intimacy ensued between them which now threatened Emily with exposure and ruin. What made the matter worse, she added, was, that young Ralph had been sent abroad by his father, and was now travelling there with a tutor; so that she was without a friend to help her; while should the slightest suspicion of her situation reach Sir Lawrence, she was certain to be turned out of doors and thrown destitute on the wide world.

There might perhaps have been another version of this story more consonant to truth, in which the word ambition would be substituted for the word love, and in which it would appear that the source of the present embarrassment originated not from the imprudence of youth, but from something much less excusable. Ralph naturally flew to her in his distress as the only person to whom he could speak of Rose; she saw the opportunity, and made use of it to soften his heart towards her by tenderness and sympathy. What followed arose out of the circumstance of Sir Lawrence's physicians having pronounced, prematurely, as it proved, that he had but a few days to live. The old man dead, Emily knew that she must leave the house immediately; and feeling that her hold on Ralph's affections was by no means a thing to be reckoned upon, she sought to make his honour an additional security. But, contrary to all expectation, the baronet suddenly revived under the prescriptions and treatment of a physician from London, and—whether his own observations, or hints from some other quarter had led him to entertain any suspicions of a growing attachment between his son and his niece does not appear—his first act, on his recovery, was to dispatch young Ralph on the grand tour, as it was then called, with a tutor of rigid morals to look after him.

Hence the imbroglío! The story, however, from Emily's lips was pathetic in the extreme; Rose was moved, and promised her best assistance. Accordingly, a plan was formed in which my mother acted a part, of which she herself ultimately became the victim. She began by affecting indisposition, and after a short interval announced that she was going away for advice, and that Miss Wellwood had, at her request, obtained Sir Lawrence's consent to accompany her. In due time they departed together, taking me and my nurse with them.

They were absent little more than a month, and almost immediately after their return Sir Lawrence was seized with a sudden relapse and died. There were no telegraphs in those days; some time elapsed before the arrival of the heir, and in the meanwhile Emily had gone to live with her relations near London. Rose would have gladly given her a temporary home, but on the proposal being hinted to my grandmother she sternly refused.

However, in due time Ralph arrived, and was informed by my mother of what had happened. He engaged, upon her representation of the case, to do all that was right and honourable, but for the present it was decided on all accounts, that Emily should remain where she was. However, he took

great interest in the child, which he arranged should be brought to the neighbourhood of Staughton, and placed under the care of a trustworthy person, alleging that it was the child of a deceased relative of his own. Perhaps not much credit was given to this story from the first, and the villagers smiled when they repeated it; but nobody had any right to inquire who was the mother of the infant, and certainly nobody suspected Miss Emily Wellwood.

What followed may be easily conceived. When my father returned, a grim and ominous silence on the part of my grandmother first alarmed him, and awakened suspicion in a mind too naturally prone to it. All appearances were against my mother, and, as she had no friends, the world was not disposed to spare her. Innocent, inexperienced, and knowing little of the ways of men, it was sometime before Rose comprehended her position; for my father's disposition did not lead him to make a sudden outbreak, nor even to seek an explanation, if explanation were possible. On the contrary, he brooded in sullenness and silence over his imaginary wrongs and misfortunes, only manifesting his dissatisfaction by a general austerity and reserve, and a tacit abnegation of my mother's society.

By-and-by, Sir Ralph, after an absence of some duration, brought down Miss Wellwood as his bride; but this, far from improving the situation, only made things worse. All communication was sternly forbidden; Staughton and all its inhabitants *tabooed*, and when, at length, my mother penetrated the mystery and saw through the dark cloud that enveloped her, it was too late to make the least impression on my father's mind, although Sir Ralph, as soon as he learnt the state of the case, despite of his wife's prohibition, insisted on making an avowal of the truth—of course, not a public avowal—but he made a full statement to my father, on whom, however, it created no impression, since so much care had been taken to shield Emily's reputation, that it was impossible to produce any satisfactory corroboration.

This confession, however, led to the expatriation of the family; Lady Wellwood finding the place insupportable to her after a circumstance so mortifying to her pride. She could not persuade herself that my father would not, sooner or later, recognise the truth, and possibly vindicate Rose by inculpating her.

Under what circumstances my poor mother died I have no means of knowing; but when—after the lapse of so many years—I fell in with the Wellwoods, in Paris, Lady W—— promoted the match both because she wanted Clara married to a man who troubled her with no questions or inquiries, and also because her permitting it was a thorough vindication of Rose, whose sad fate was incurred by her endeavour to save her friend from disgrace and ruin.

Little remains to be told. As I have said, I became a wanderer on the face of the earth, and Clara, who had no clue whatever to the motive of my departure, and was constantly expecting my return, felt herself bound to obey my injunctions, and neither seek to penetrate the mystery herself nor allow any one else to do it. She therefore

never mentioned the circumstance in her letters to her family; and the first news that reached them of my unaccountable disappearance, was in that which announced my wife's death. She had unhappily confided her situation to no one; and a woman from the village, summoned in haste when the extremity came, was the only aid she had.

Whether from want of skill or from Clara's previous state of mental suffering remains uncertain; but mother and child both perished; and, I confess, when my confidential agent, who alone was acquainted with my address, communicated the event to me, I looked on it as the best possible termination to a frightful tragedy.

Years elapsed; Elfdale was odious to me; I would have sold it, but it was entailed. England was odious to me—I may say the whole world was odious to me; but of all creatures in it the Wellwoods were the most so; from my earliest years they had been the real source of all my misery. But for them I might have had a happy childhood, if my father's heart had not been turned to stone by the criminality of Sir Ralph and my mother; how different might every thing have been with me through life! How well I understand his hatred of them! Oh! if he had but confided in me! And, ah! if I had but died believing myself only a victim and not a criminal!

On Lady Wellwood and her son's arrival at Elfdale, they found Clara and her infant buried, and the secret that was to account for my extraordinary absence was buried with them. Lady W—— was sure that her unfortunate daughter had never had a suspicion that she was anything but Sir Ralph's niece; and although she almost suspected that my strange disappearance was in some way connected with the old calumny about my mother, it was neither possible, nor now, she thought, worth while to attempt clearing it up.

Long years afterwards, when Lady Wellwood was dead and Sir Ralph was married and living at Staughton, one day a foreigner presented himself at the back-door and requested to speak with him. On being admitted he said he was a courier by profession, and that he had been requested to deliver a box, which he had brought with him, into the hands of the baronet. The person who sent it was now dead—he had also been a courier, of the name of Rosetti—beyond this the bearer knew nothing.

On opening the box a full narration of the above circumstances was found in the handwriting of the late Sir Ralph, together with letters corroborating the statements he made respecting the birth of Clara and the innocence of my mother, whose picture an accurate copy in little of the one at Elfdale, was also found there,—that picture which, perhaps, in the flurry of the moment, and to avert further questions, Lady Wellwood had told Clara was the picture of her mother. The nurse who went to London with Rose and Emily was the mother of Phibba, the gardener. She knew the truth, and her silence had been bought by Lady Wellwood. This woman was now dead, but her son still lived. He had never quitted Elfdale, and though a very old man, was working

there when, on the occasion of this news reaching me, I returned to England.

When I questioned him he confirmed the whole statement, and assured me that aware of my enmity to him, and foreseeing that sooner or later the report of my mother's guilt would reach me, he had hoped to appease my ill-will and win my favour by revealing the truths, but that I had cut off the opportunity myself by my conduct towards him on the morning after my return, and by my subsequent disappearance from the spot.

Now, how much of my misery and the misery of those connected with me was due to adverse fate, and how much to my own mistaken line of conduct, it is difficult to say; but of this I am sure that had I been treated with kindness and affection in my childhood, the faults of my character, which I fear were in some degree innate, might have been modified; and certain it is, that if my father, instead of shutting up his secrets and his sorrows in his own breast, had made me his confidant, he would himself have found sympathy and consolations, and I should have escaped a life of needless suffering and never-dying remorse.

SPIRIT-RAPPING MADE EASY.

No. II.

THE CORNHILL NARRATIVE AND THE PERFORMANCES OF MR. HOME. BY KATERFELTO.

(Continued from page 494.)

I now come to the performances of Mr. Home himself, which are conceived to be so conclusive by Mr. Howitt and the whole Spiritualist fraternity.

If Mr. Home will meet some half dozen persons (myself included), to be named by the Editor of this Magazine, and, under the conditions which they will prescribe, as essential to a full and fair examination, will prevail on the Spirits to manifest themselves more clearly, or if, under such conditions, they will even repeat the effects mentioned in the "Cornhill" narrative, I will, if I fail in accounting for the phenomena on some known laws of nature, at once admit Mr. Home's pretensions as a Medium of the Spirit world. If he will not accept this challenge, or, if professedly accepting it, he or the Spirits (I treat them as synonymous) decline the manifestations required for an adequate test, I shall maintain my right to regard him as a clever charlatan. On such occasions as these the avowal of one's convictions is of far more importance than politeness to individuals; and I proceed in this spirit to perform a public duty.

The representations of Mr. Home himself, as to his relations with the Spirit world, I esteem of no consequence, and I put them aside. Whether he claims or disclaims a mastery of the "secrets of the grave" is perfectly immaterial to the question on which I propose to meet him. This question is a very short, or, at least, a very plain one. Is Mr. Home himself a conscious and controlling agent in the effects produced, and are the manifestations of the so-called Spirits the tricks and devices of his own ingenuity? Is he, in short, a conjuror, without the candour to avow his function? If so, he may tell us that he "is thoroughly impassive in these matters, and that, whatever happens, happens from causes over which he has

not the slightest influence," but his statement is merely a part of his jugglery, and the writer of the "Cornhill" narrative is begging the entire question when he terms it "unreserved," as if it were true. If Mr. Home is really a conjuror, it is not only a reservation but a denial of the very basis and essence of the truth which it is our business to seek out and ascertain. As an answer to a charge, it is equivalent to a plea of "Not Guilty," but as evidence to disprove the charge, it is frivolous and immaterial.

It is hardly more to the purpose to discuss Mr. Home's personal appearance, or the ease and playfulness of his manner, or his apparent respectability. We can hardly expect him to cultivate the airs of a Cagliostro, if he professes to be none, while we give him credit for tact in a superior degree, when we admit the eminence to which he has attained as a Medium. His demeanour may be the effect of adroitness or sincerity, of conscious power or of conscious innocence. All that we can say upon this head is, that his demeanour alone does not convict him. As it is equally insufficient to procure his acquittal, we may dismiss it from our minds as of no more weight than his representations.

If he would favour us with a *séance*, we should have the best means of forming a conclusive opinion as to the value of both of these. In the meantime we confine ourselves to the description of his performances in the "Cornhill Magazine," and judge, hypothetically, what these amount to.

Inasmuch as these performances were accompanied by devices obviously adapted to conceal the particular agencies employed, I conceive that they should be viewed with suspicion from the very outset. This is the proper mood in which to approach their consideration. Speculation as to motives or inferences from demeanour, and still less the statements of Mr. Home himself, should be brushed away as so much *dust* which is simply calculated to mislead us.

When we come to the substantial allegations of the narrative, I find that the writer describes the *séance* as commencing about nine o'clock in the evening in a spacious drawing-room, no matter where. The company consisted of eight or nine ladies and gentlemen who took their seats at a round table in the centre of the room. In other parts of the room there were sofas and ottomans, and between the centre table and three windows, which filled up one side of the room, there was a large sofa. The windows were draped with thick curtains and protected by *spring blinds*. The space in front of the centre window was *unoccupied*; but the windows on the right and left were filled by geranium stands. The reader is invited to observe the words I have italicised, for they indicate circumstances of considerable importance in the exhibitions which followed. We have a right to assume that Mr. Home was already acquainted with the furniture of the apartment and with the manner in which it was disposed. At all events, there was nothing to prevent him from taking a full survey of its capabilities before the *séance* actually commenced. For whether he has the appearance of a Cagliostro or the reverse, or is easy, or stiff, or candid, or reserved, there can be no doubt that the nature of his function, interpret it as we will,

must develop the power of prompt and accurate observation.

The writer passes over some preliminary vibrations and implied performances by the table as of very subordinate interest. At all events, they may have served as requisite preliminaries, and may have prepared the mood of the spectators for the greater marvels to follow. I infer that they were directly instrumental, in a further sense, in arranging the spectators in the very position which suited the subsequent requirements of Mr. Home. If we reflect for a moment we shall see the obvious objection to his placing the spectators at the outset in the position they afterwards assumed. Had he asked, of his own wish or desire, that none of them would sit *with his back to the window*, the request would have sounded singularly suspicious, and might have aroused the vigilance of some one or other present. It is really a great point to assign to the spirits not only a share in the performance of the tricks themselves, but to call in their aid in arranging the spectators, as I infer, from the following sentence, was done on this occasion.

Thus, the writer says, that "from the unmistakable indications, conveyed in different forms, the table was finally removed to the centre window displacing the sofa, which was wheeled away. The deep space between the table and the window was *unoccupied*, but the rest of the circle was closely packed."

My readers will again observe the part of the arrangement on which I lay stress, because, as I infer, it was absolutely essential that no person should be directly facing the side of the room from which I have reason to suppose that a chief phenomenon subsequently emanated. We are further told that "some sheets of white paper, and two or three lead pencils, an accordion, a small hand-bell, and a few flowers, were placed on the table." Then "sundry communications took place," and "at length an intimation was received, through the usual channel of correspondence, that the lights must be *extinguished*."

Of course, for the more elaborate class of tricks which can only be performed by some such means as I am about to describe, it is important that the room should be as obscure as possible. The writer of the "Cornhill" narrative himself admits as much in his very brief comment on the intimation received from the table. "As this direction is understood to be given only when *unusual* manifestations are about to be made, it was followed by an interval of anxious suspense. There were lights on the walls, mantelpiece, and console-table, and the process of putting them out seemed tedious. When the last was extinguished a dead silence ensued, in which the tick of a watch could be heard." I must confess to a passing contempt for the spirits who can do nothing *unusual* till all the candles are put out, and I assume this is a reason why they have not as yet ventured on any exhibitions in a public capacity. Moreover, I cannot conceive a more accommodating audience for a conjuror's devices, nor indeed a much more ridiculous spectacle, than a company of ladies and gentlemen, prepared for something out of the common,

sitting exactly as the exhibitor himself has disposed them, credulous, if not already half-convinced, in a state of breathless expectation, squeezed together in the dark.

If my readers will really let their minds dwell on this combination for a moment, and if it does not tickle them, they must be deficient in a sense of humour.

"We must now," says the writer, "have been in utter darkness, but for the pale light that came in through the window, and the flickering glare thrown fitfully over a distant part of the room by a fire which was rapidly sinking in the grate. We could see, but could scarcely distinguish, our hands upon the table. A festoon of dull gleaming forms round the circle represented what we knew to be our hands. An occasional ray from the window, now and then, revealed the hazy surface of the white sheets" (we presume this means, of the paper) "and the misty bulk of the accordion. We knew where these were placed, and could discover them with the slightest assistance from the grey cold light of a watery sky. The stillness of expectation that ensued during the first few minutes of that visible darkness, was so profound, that, for all the sounds of life that were heard, it might have been an empty chamber. The table and the window, and the space between the table and the window, engrossed all eyes. It was in that direction everybody instinctively looked for a revelation," and thus, when even the instincts of the audience were in tune, there commenced the series of revelations which I am about to describe.

It is material to observe that, as we are told some time afterwards, Mr. Home himself was seated *next the window*.

"Presently the tassel of the cord of the spring-blind began to tremble. We could see it plainly against the sky, and attention being drawn to the circumstance, every eye was upon the tassel. Slowly, and apparently with caution, or difficulty, the blind began to descend; the cord was evidently being drawn, but the force applied to pull down the blind seemed feeble and uncertain. It succeeded, however, at last, and the room was thrown into deeper darkness than before." The instrument by which this was effected was probably a strong pair of lazy-tongs, such as these in figs. 16 and 17, inserted at the side and



Fig. 16.



Fig. 17.

under cover of the "thick curtains with which the windows were draped." I say, "inserted at the side," because it is perfectly obvious, from the *trembling* of the tassel, that it was not

employed to pull down the blind, for directly it was so employed it would tremble no longer. We are further informed that the blind was also raised as well as pulled down several times, a feat more quickly manageable, since, as we have observed, it was a spring-blind; and nothing would be easier than to pull the tassel of the spring which hung behind the curtains. The writer remarks the difficulty with which the blind descended, but he does not say as much with respect to its ascent. He then adds a candid and very significant statement, that, "capricious as the movement appeared, the ultimate object seemed to be to *diminish the light*."

The writer intimates that their vision was becoming accustomed to the previous gloom, and forms of things were growing palpable, although they could see nothing distinctly. But *after* the light had been diminished (the spirits being apparently particularly solicitous on this point), "a whisper passed round the table about hands having been seen or felt." . . . "Unable," says the writer, "to answer for what happened to others, I will speak only of what I observed myself. *The table cover was drawn over my knees as it was with the others*," in short the most convenient means was taken to preclude the detection of the agencies about to operate beneath the table. The writer then says that he distinctly felt a *twitch*, several times repeated, at his knee. "It was the sensation of a boy's hand, partly scratching, partly striking and pulling me in play. It went away. Others described the same sensation; and the celerity with which it frolicked, like Puck, under the table, now at one side and now at another, was surprising." The surprise, however, vanishes at once, if we ascribe these twitches, scratches, blows, pinches, and gambols to their obvious source—a pair of lazy-tongs worked by some person present, and in all probability by Mr. Home himself.

Let us first of all mark the obscurity in which practically his movements were shrouded. "Through the semi-darkness his head was dimly visible against the curtains, and his hands might be seen in a *faint white heap* before him:" that is to say, they were probably held one over the other, and there would be no visible diminution of the white heap if one of them were withdrawn,—at all events no diminution that could be detected at a session of inquiring spirits restricted to observations in a room so effectually darkened. If Mr. Home could extract his under hand, he could work the lazy-tongs beneath the table, especially as the table cover was so conveniently disposed as to cover even the knees of the easy inquisitor. I make the inference that the lazytongs were at all events employed by some one, and that Mr. Home was not operating by means of his feet, like his sister Mediums described in my former paper. All the circumstances mentioned here point unequivocally to the employment of this instrument. Some such construction as this in Figs. 18 and 19, would produce the *twitches* and the *pulling*; the *scratching* would be produced by its attempt to get a hold of smooth surfaces, as for example where the trowsers were strained over the knees, &c.; the

striking would result from the blow given by the end of the tongs when it was suddenly shot out in

Fig. 18.

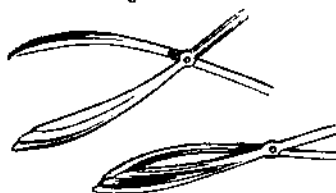
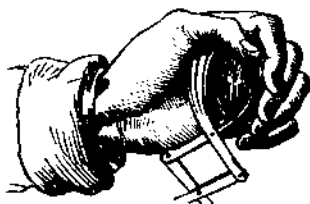


Fig. 19.

search of objects to grasp. It might feel like a "boy's hand," or a girl's hand, or an old woman's hand, to anybody who speculated, with the least tendency to give licence to his imagination. Moreover, no hands or feet could compete with it in the "celerity with which it frolicked, like Puck, under the table, now at one side, now at another." It would have been impossible to shift the feet or the hands, so as to attain this celerity without a derangement of the body, of which the contiguous sitters would have been sensible. Therefore I have not the slightest doubt that the lazy-toogs was the source of these phenomena, especially when I find the necessity for their employment, which arose at a subsequent stage of the performance, and to which I shall advert when I mount to that higher stage of the great Cornhill Mystery.

It will be observed that the writer was on the point of identifying this instrument to his own satisfaction; but if he just stopped short of that, he has identified it to mine. He states that soon after the twitching, scraping process, &c., "what seemed to be a large hand came under the table cover, and with the fingers clustered to a point, raised it between me and the table." As it was "under the table cover," the impression as to its fingers must have been somewhat conjectural, especially as these same fingers were "clustered to a point." The writer evinces the uncertainty of his impression as to its nature, for he states that he was somewhat eager to satisfy his curiosity. "I seized it," he adds, "felt it very sensibly, but it went out like air in my grasp. I know of no analogy in connection with the sense of touch by which I could make the nature of that feeling intelligible. It was as palpable as any soft substance, velvet or pulp, and at the touch it seemed as solid; but pressure reduced it to air." The surface velvety-feel could be easily produced by various kinds of covering, while its evaporation in the writer's grasp may be as easily accounted for. Assuming that he seized the two ends when they were in some degree open, as thus in Fig. 20, if they were instantly closed and with-



drawn, the pressure of his hand would appear to reduce them to air.

"Whither were they vanished? Into the air; and what seemed corporeal, melted as breath into the wind—*would they had staid!*" we exclaim in the words of Macbeth, and then we could have given the reader their exact length and true dimensions, and told him whether they were covered with terry velvet or caoutchouc.

It is highly probable that the hand-bell, taken under the table from the hand of a person who held it there, which was rung at different points, and then returned (still under the table), was operated on by the same instrument. The hand of Mr. Home, which still remained on the table, could easily agitate the surface of the table-cloth, so as to cause the white sheets of paper to move, and gradually disappear over the edge of the table into the blank space beneath the window; and if it was there that they lay, any further movements of Mr. Home, who sat next the window, would equally account for their "creasing and crumpling on the floor" for a considerable time afterwards; and they could be returned in like manner. So, also, flowers could be grasped and distributed, with the assistance of the lazy-tongs, or disengaged hand, to any person in the circle. "The substance of what seemed a hand, with white, long, and delicate fingers, rose slowly in the darkness, and, bending over a flower, suddenly vanished with it. . . The flowers were distributed in the manner in which they had been removed; a hand, of which the lambent gleam was visible, slowly ascending from beneath the cover, and placing the flower in the hand for which it was intended." The same instrument could snip the geranium blossoms in the adjoining window, and toss them among the company. In all this there is nothing extraordinary—nothing half so strange as the inference seemingly suggested, that the spirits are unable to make presents to their favourites, unless the materials are provided at mortal cost, and are in tolerably close proximity to the recipients.

I infer that in the next place the accordion also disappeared by the very same agency. "It was as black as pitch," says the writer, "but we could just make out 'a dark mass' rising awkwardly above the edge of the table, and clumsily emitting a sound as it passed over into the space beneath. A quarter of an hour afterwards we heard the accordion beginning to play where it lay on the ground." The accordion was lying "in a narrow space which would not admit of its being drawn out with the requisite freedom to the full extent;" whence I assume that it did not falsify the principles of its construction by any performance of its own, but that something else was heard, of which in the dark, and with the help of the imagination, judiciously directed towards the place where it lay, the helpless accordion obtained all the credit. There is an instrument termed a mouth-harmonicon, of which a representation appears over-leaf, in fig. 21, and which is, in fact, the musical principle of an accordion, to which the mouth plays the part of bellows, with the increased powers of modu-

I assume was the instrument which executed the exquisite music described by the narrator,



Fig. 21.

and which was so far beyond the compass of a stolid leather bellows.

The air was wild, and full of strange transitions; with a wail of the most pathetic sweetness running through it. The execution was no less remarkable for its delicacy than its power. When the notes swelled in some of the bold passages, the sound rolled through the room with an astounding reverberation; then, gently subsiding, sank into a strain of divine tenderness. But it was the close that touched the hearts, and drew the tears of the listeners. Milton dreamt of this wondrous termination when he wrote of "linked sweetness long drawn out." By what art the accordion was made to yield that dying note, let practical musicians determine. Our ears, that heard it, had never before been visited by "a sound so fine." It continued diminishing and diminishing, and stretching far away into distance and darkness, until the attenuated thread of sound became so exquisite that it was impossible at last to fix the moment when it ceased.

Of course, where the vanishing point was so extremely fine, it is difficult to interpose appropriately. "Bravo, mouth-harmonicon!" but I am not inclined to leave it to "practical musicians" to inquire if an accordion can yield that dying note. I have little doubt that a mouth-harmonicon deserved all the praise, and was really employed for these peculiar effects, more especially as during Mr. Home's "aërial passage" it was subsequently heard from a distant corner of the room, while there is no evidence that the accordion was not still lying in the place beneath the table, to which it had descended, as I infer, by Mr. Home's own agency.

My view does not in the least exclude the presumption that the accordion itself was a remarkable instrument. On the contrary, it possessed an internal mechanical capacity of motion, if not of sound, since it subsequently performed, or seemed to perform, in the full light, while held by the narrator and others who were present. It was even difficult to hold, a self-acting accordion being, as I infer, a far more athletic instrument than its self-performing relative a musical snuffbox. If I had myself encountered such an eccentric self-willed instrument, I should have greatly desired to *impound* it for careful examination. Mr. Howitt would refer me to Plato, and Zoroaster, to Moses and Mrs. Marshall, to rebuke my incredulity; but in answer to all such vapid generalities, I persist in giving to any one, who may witness a similar phenomenon, this significant piece of advice,—"Impound that accordion."

I now come to the great superlative feat of all, the ascent and aërial passage of Mr. Home; and this is so important, that I am solicitous not to lose a word of the writer's description, and extract it that we may see just what it amounts to.

Mr. Home was seated next to the window. Through the semi-darkness his head was dimly visible against

the curtains, and his hands might be seen in a faint white heap before him. Presently he said in a quiet voice, "My chair is moving—I am off the ground—don't notice me—talk of something else," or words to that effect. It was very difficult to restrain the curiosity not unmixed with a more serious feeling, which these few words awakened; but we talked incoherently enough, upon some indifferent topic. I was sitting nearly opposite to Mr. Home, and I saw his hands disappear from the table, and his head vanish into the deep shadow beyond. In a moment or two more he spoke again. This time his voice was in the air above our heads. He had risen from his chair to a height of four or five feet from the ground. As he ascended higher he described his position, which at first was perpendicular, and afterwards became horizontal. He said he felt as if he had been turned in the gentlest manner, as a child is turned in the arms of a nurse. In a moment or two more, he told us that he was going to pass across the window, against the grey silvery light of which he would be visible. We watched in profound stillness, and saw his figure pass from one side of the window to the other, feet foremost, lying horizontally in the air. He spoke to us as he passed, and told us that he would turn the reverse way, and recross the window; which he did. His own tranquil confidence in the safety of what seemed from below a situation of the most novel peril, gave confidence to everybody else; but, with the strongest nerves, it was impossible not to be conscious of a certain sensation of fear or awe. He hovered round the circle for several minutes, and passed this time perpendicularly over our heads. I heard his voice behind me in the air, and felt something lightly brush my chair. It was his foot, which he gave me leave to touch. Turning to the spot where it was on the top of the chair, I placed my hand gently upon it, when he uttered a cry of pain, and the foot was withdrawn quickly, with a palpable shudder. It was evidently not resting on the chair, but floating; and it sprang from the touch as a bird would. He now passed over to the farthest extremity of the room, and we could judge by his voice of the altitude and distance he had attained. He had reached the ceiling, upon which he made a slight mark, and soon afterwards descended and resumed his place at the table. An incident which occurred during this aërial passage, and imparted a strange solemnity to it, was that the accordion, which we supposed to be on the ground under the window close to us, played a strain of wild pathos in the air, from the most distant corner of the room.

It is to be observed that the writer throughout speaks of this feat as really accomplished.

"Mr. Home had risen from his chair four or five feet . . . he ascended higher . . . we saw his figure pass the window . . . he did recross it . . . he hovered round and passed over us . . . his foot was evidently floating . . . he reached the ceiling . . . he afterwards descended, and resumed his place at the table." The spiritualists who quote this narrative quote it invariably in this sense, as if there was conclusive evidence that Home actually floated about the room. But if we examine the narrative we shall find that this is merely vague inference; and a very brief examination will show what the facts really amount to.

In the first place, there is no evidence that the corporeal Home was actually seen in the air at any time. His figure was seen passing and repassing the window, and even his figure was seen nowhere else. His foot was felt in the air at about the height of the narrator's chair. His voice was

heard in the air, or seemed to be heard in the air in different places. From all this I can make certain inferences as to his devices, but I do not arrive at the conclusion that he actually floated, still less that he did so by the assistance of spirits, whose function it was to chair him, like the candidate at an election.

The first inference I make is that he is a very adroit ventriloquist, aware especially of the chief source of ventriloquial effect, the art of directing the expectations of his audience to look for certain sounds in certain directions and places. "I am off the ground," he exclaims, that is, ascending into the air; and in a moment or two, "his voice was in the air above our heads." He told us that he should pass the window, and accordingly, "he spoke to us," or seemed to speak to us from the appointed situation. "We could judge by his voice of the altitude and distance he had attained." Let us rather say that imagination assented to his statements when he had previously given an intimation where he desired it to be supposed he would be; for, let me observe, it is extremely difficult to judge of a man's situation in a room, by his voice only. It would scarcely be fainter if he were near the ceiling than if he were standing on the ground. Let my readers, who doubt this, mount a set of library steps, and ascertain it by experiment. In fact ventriloquial effects will be found to be generally false when they are tested by any true criterion of comparison. Ventriloquists almost always exaggerate nature, especially as a means of indicating distance; and they make up the illusion by prompting their audiences to imagine the effects they fail themselves to represent completely; as any one may see any night of his life in the case of Herr Von Joel, who persists in looking and inducing his audience to look for his "leetle singing lark," up in the ceiling of Evans's supper room.

With the assistance of this sort of prompting, it is really extraordinary what ventriloquists can accomplish, and the extent to which they can affect a sympathising audience. Even savages possess this power, and I will cite an instance, described by Capt. Lyons, in which he found a performer as skilful as Mr. Home among the Esquimaux of Igloodik. The whole narrative is so much to the purpose, and so clearly suggestive, that I extract it entire, as a means of comparison and a very opportune assistance to our judgment.

"This personage," says Captain Lyons, of the Esquimaux Home, "was cunning and intelligent, and whether professionally or from his skill in the chase—but, perhaps, from both reasons—was considered by all the tribe as a man of importance. As I invariably paid great deference to his opinion on all subjects connected with his calling, he freely communicated to me his superior knowledge, and did not scruple to allow of my being present at his interviews with *Tornaga*, or his patron spirit. In consequence of this, I took an early opportunity of requesting my friend to exhibit his skill in my cabin. His old wife was with him, and, by much flattery and an accidental display of a glittering knife and some beads, she assisted me in obtaining my request. At light excluded, our sorcerer began chanting to his wife with great vehemence, and she, in return, answered by singing the *Anna-Arja*, which was not

could hear, he afterwards began turning himself rapidly round, and in a loud powerful voice vociferated for *Tornaga* with great impatience, at the same time blowing and snorting like a walrus. His noise, impatience, and agitation increased every moment; and he at length seated himself on the deck, varying his tones and making a rustling with his clothes. Suddenly the voice seemed smothered, and was so managed as to sound as if retreating beneath the deck, each moment becoming more distant, and ultimately giving the idea of being many feet below the cabin, when it ceased entirely. His wife now, in answer to my questions, informed me very seriously that he had dived, and that he would send up *Tornaga*. Accordingly, in about half a minute, a distant blowing was heard very slowly approaching, and a voice which differed from that at first heard was at times mingled with the blowing, until at length both sounds became indistinct, and the old woman informed me that *Tornaga* was come to answer my questions. I accordingly asked several questions of the spirit, to each of which inquiries I received an answer by two loud claps on the deck—which I was given to understand were favourable.

A very hollow yet powerful voice—certainly much different from the tones of Toolmak—now chanted for some time, and a strange jumble of hisses, groans, shouts, and gobbling like a turkey succeeded in rapid order.

The old woman sang with increased energy; and, as I took it for granted that all this was intended to astonish the Kabloona, I cried repeatedly that I was very much afraid. This, as I expected, added fuel to the fire, until the poor immortal, exhausted by its own might, asked leave to retire.

The voice gradually sunk from our hearing as at first, and a very indistinct hissing succeeded; in its advance it sounded like the tones produced by the wind on the bass chords of the Eolian harp. This was soon changed to a rapid hiss like that of a rocket, and Toolmak, with a yell, announced his return. I had held my breath at the first distant hissing, and twice exhausted myself, yet our conjuror did not once respire, and even his returning and powerful yell was uttered without a previous stop or inspiration of air.

Light being admitted, our wizard was, as might be expected, in a profuse perspiration, and certainly much exhausted by his exertions, which had continued for at least half an hour. We now observed a couple of bunches, each consisting of two stripes of white deer-skin, and a long piece of sinew attached to the back of his coat. These we had not observed before, and were informed they were sewn on by *Tornaga* while he was below.

The reader will perceive that Toolmak had great natural capacities similar to those which I ascribe to Mr. Home, and that, with a few lessons from the latter gentleman, he might also have floated about, as Mediums can float, with a "tranquil confidence" in their aerial capacities, inversely proportioned to the darkness of the atmosphere. I have yet, however, to account for the appearance of Mr. Home himself, seen to cross and re-cross the drawing-room window-blind, as in fig. 22; but I will, first of all, quote a letter from Dr. Gully, who was present at this very identical séance, and who, in a letter to the "Morning Star," exhausts his theory of the artistic contrivances capable of producing this extraordinary spectacle. "Only consider," says the ingenious Doctor, "that here is a man, between ten and eleven stone in weight, floating about the room for many minutes—in the tomb-

voice coming from different quarters of the room, according to his then position—is it probable, is it possible, that any machinery could be devised—not to speak of its being set up and previously



Fig. 22.

made ready in a room, which was fixed upon as the place of meeting only five minutes before we entered it—capable of carrying such a weight about without the slightest sound of any description? Or suppose, as has been suggested, that he bestrode an inflated balloon, could a balloon have been introduced inflated large enough to hold in mid-air such a weight? Or could it have been inflated with hydrogen gas without being detected by ears, eyes, or nose?"

As this exhausts the list of Dr. Gully's hypotheses, and as I have no desire to shock such a sincere believer, I say at once that I lay no stress on machinery or inflated balloons. I do not think it likely even that Mr. Home sent past the window an inflated dummy of gold-beater's skin to represent himself, as many more wary persons have a tendency to suppose. I do not think so for a couple of reasons, either of which is quite sufficient. In the first place, though Mediums must run unusual risks whenever they favour us with unusual performances, it would be too much to risk the ludicrous discovery of a great dummy figure from the sputter of a chance lucifer match or the sudden flash of a concealed lantern. Such a dummy would be liable to a prod with a stick, which would evaporate his hydrogen, and be a "home-thrust" indeed. And, secondly, there is no occasion whatever to encounter this risk; for the effect witnessed on this particular occasion can be produced, by a little compact portable magic-lantern, with the simple addition of one phantasmagoria slide.

As to the disc of the lantern it may be reduced to any shape or figure we please, and nothing

would be easier than to make its subdued light correspond exactly with the dimensions and tone of the window-blind on which its shadows are projected. We all know how the black shadows of the phantasmagoria appear to stand out from the surface on which they are displayed into the very centre of a room, and thus we obtain a body—apparently an actual corporeal substance—passing above heads which are mystified by the assistance of a little ventriloquism. A single slide is sufficient, for we have only to insert that slide the reverse way, and the Home who crossed, will then re-cross the blind with undiminished effectiveness.

Fig. 23.

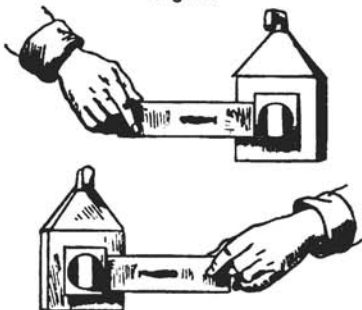


Fig. 24.

We now see why there was no one sitting so as to face the wall opposite the window, and why the sofa was displaced to procure this arrangement. Mr. Home's foot was doubtless touched by the narrator under some such circumstances as these:—



Fig. 25.

"It was withdrawn quickly, with a palpable shudder" at his imminent risk of detection; while as to his "slight mark" upon the ceiling, this could easily have been made by the lazy-tongs.

After this mystification obtained on such very cheap terms, it is easy enough to induce the audience to hear "the tread of spirits with velvet steps across the floor;" and by means of further ventriloquism "the ear catches the plaintive murmur of the departed child whispering a tender cry of 'Mother!' through the darkness." A

circle of Pandits so completely puzzled might be permitted even to hear the bottled sounds of the Bells of Solomon's Temple, which were proffered for sale to the faithful in the middle ages. For my own part, I see, hear, and understand only this much, that Mr. Home is a very clever ventriloquist, a superior player on the mouth-harmonicon; that he possesses an accordion, probably self-acting, a magic-lantern, a lazy-tongue, much assurance, an accomplice or two—perhaps many of them in

various quarters—a large circle of accommodating dupes, and of candid, half-doubting, half-credulous spectators, and that he has been too leniently treated by our friends of the "Cornhill Magazine," who have missed their chance of detecting an ingenious charlatan.

[From the communications already received on the subject of these articles, and from those yet expected, it may be necessary to recur to the subject in some future number. On this point, should occasion arise, our readers will not be disappointed.—
ED. ONCE A WEEK.]

A HEAD OF HAIR FOR SALE.



"But, Monsieur, it is very little."

"I confess it, mademoiselle, the sum I offer is very insignificant."

"See, monsieur, my hair is a good colour (it was a dainty rich brown), and it is very long (the perruquier's mouth watered, for she unbound it, and it fell below her waist). Surely, monsieur, you will give me more than thirty francs?"

"On my word, mademoiselle, I could not offer you a sou more. Your hair is very beautiful, I admit, but in effect the article is a complete drug at present. Trade is dull, very dull, and I know not when I should have use for it. Keep it,

mademoiselle, until the times improve. And besides, it is a pity that you should part with it at all."

(The perruquier saw that the poor fish was ravenous, and he had hardly need to play his meagre bait. The rogue wished to appear indifferent, but he had at that moment in hand a commission from an aged child of fashion who would have given a year's income for a natural flow of hair like that of the deprecating daughter of need.)

"Ah, well, monsieur! you are very hard, but I must take the sum you offer."

There was only a thin partition between us and the bureau in which the bargain was being concluded, and we could tell by the sharp click of the perruquier's scissors that the purchase was being consummated. The light entered the shop obliquely, and through the thinly veiled window of the bureau we could see the shorn lamb grasp the pittance with eager hands, while she hastily adjusted her bonnet, and with a challenging look in the glass, murmured in a low but distinct voice, as if to herself, "but I am still pretty."

"And so you are," thought we, as we inwardly exclaimed, "may Heaven temper its winds to your condition, poor child!" and took up our small purchase, and followed her. There was something in her manner and her meagre gentility of dress, which told us that she was on an errand of self-sacrifice, and may the guardian angels of poverty forgive the curiosity which tracked their protégée to her holy of holies.

It was a long walk, but her pace never flagged. Starting from the Avenue de Marigny, threading rapidly the crowded pavements of the Faubourg Sainte Honore, passing over the Champs Elysées with a single glance at the luxurious equipages thronging the avenue up the Rue de Chaillot, and through the dingy streets leading to Passy, she at length entered a house which appeared as though it had long been a victim of the Court of Chancery. Against the dust-ridden and blistered door-post we saw carelessly lounging a card, which seemed as though itself was growing sallow with long deferred hope, inscribed with the words "*apartements meublés*." It was a shallow pretext, but we rang the bell and our summons was deliberately answered by a portress, whose ancient limbs seemed grating with the rust of years and inaction. She was an antique gem, was this concierge, and we thought if everything in the establishment were *en suite*, there must be a very vegetative sort of life going on there. Her sabots were of the heaviest, her blue woollen stockings of the most darning variety possible, her linsay-woolsey petticoat of the curtest, reaching barely to her calf, which was of the stoutest; her serge apron of the bluest, her neck-archief of the yellowest, her cap of the loftiest—mounting guard over her face—and her nose of the shortest; but there was a beam of good nature on her broad, wrinkled face, and we felt conscience, the Nemesis of rascality, nudging us, as we thought what unfounded hopes we were raising in her bosom.

"You have apartments to let, I believe."

"Yes, will monsieur condescend to enter?"

"Thank you (the Rubicon passed). On what floor are they?"

"*Au troisième*, monsieur, and they are very comfortable. We are quiet here, monsieur, although not far from the resort of fashion, but we do not claim to be of the *beau monde*. Alas! no, we are not people of fashion, although our last tenant was a gentleman of position, for he had been valet to a great Duke."

Monsieur was overpowered with regret, but he was a professional man in search of a première, and was afraid the ascent of three pair of stairs

would be too fatiguing to his patients. He was charmed with the air of quiet comfort around him (Heaven forgive the flattering falsehood!); but he saw that it was impossible. However, would madame allow him to rest, and procure him a little wine?

The old lady's garrulity came to a painful check; but with native tact she merely expressed her regret, and replied that monsieur was perfectly welcome to rest as long as he pleased. She had a little grandchild in attendance upon a sick lodger *au quatrième*, who would be delighted to fetch monsieur some wine.

Monsieur was all gratitude, and now that the ice was broken, he ventured to ask if the young lady who had just entered was a locataire.

"Oh! mademoiselle Marie, yes, monsieur. Her mother is the sick lodger of whom I have spoken. She is sick to the death, but mademoiselle is a good girl, a brave girl, though Heaven only knows how the poor thing bears it. The Virgin must hear her prayers, and carries the poor child through her struggles."

The wine had now arrived and assisted in mellowing our plot. Madame Justine would have a small glass (we did not fear its strength, and poured her out a tumbler), and it gave more freedom to her tongue.

"Stay, *mon chou*," said she to her grandchild, "how is madame this evening?"

The little "cabbage" eyed the franc piece we gave her with a glance of intense satisfaction, and replied: "Madame is worse, grandmère. She is excited, too; oh! so excited with Mademoiselle Marie."

"Is it so, poor child, and why is she so excited?"

"Only because mademoiselle has had her hair cut; but it is no shorter than mine." The little "cabbage" was polled as close as a child in a Domb picture).

We saw that the time had come for making a clean breast of it, so we detailed to Madame Justine what we had witnessed in the perruquier's shop, and hoped that madame would point out any way in which a friend could serve her lodgers. Madame Justine had grown loquacious under the stimulus of our faithful ally, the Médoc, but she seemed rather suspicious of our motives, and it required some explanation to reassure her.

"Monsieur," said she, "is very good, but mademoiselle and her mother are very proud. They would starve before they would receive charity from a stranger."

"Are they so proud that they would reject the sympathy of a friend? Is there no way of aiding them without wounding their self-respect?"

"They are dead to those who should receive their love, and they shrink from the pity of strangers. Listen, monsieur, and you shall know their history." Justine then gave us the following narration.

Marie's father was an only child, and of a good family, and was educated for a physician. He was sent to Paris to study his profession; and, like many other young men under similar circumstances, he became gay in his living. "But,"

said Justine, "he committed what would have been in any case a folly, and was in him a madness. He formed a connection with an actress, and eventually married her, and his family discarded him. He was mad, very mad, for he knew only enough of medicine to obtain a subordinate place with a surgeon, and they had need of all their romance to make their realities tolerable. Madame, however, was faithful, and Marie was born to them. Soon after this event monsieur died, his last moments being made bitter by the reflection that he was leaving his wife and child the prey of poverty, and Madame supported herself and child by the sale of fancy needlework, and giving lessons in music. She had offers of engagements at the theatres, but she refused them, and fought on single-handed against her destiny. She had a hard struggle with the world, poor lady, but she held her ground until about six months since, when she was put *hors de combat*, the doctors say, with consumption, and is following her husband at the quick step. Mademoiselle Marie is eighteen, and is a good girl, oh! a brave girl. She has stepped into the gap left by her prostrate mother, and monsieur le propriétaire is very forbearing; but I fear the poor child is nearly beaten in the double struggle with her heart and body. For you must know, monsieur, that Marie has a little affair. She is the fiancée of a *sous officier*, who is now struggling with death before Sebastopol. He has been honourably mentioned and decorated for his bravery, but since a long time Marie has only heard that he is in hospital with Crimean fever, and the poor child's anxiety is touching when she speaks of him."

Perhaps memory brought Justine a whiff of one of her own "little affairs," out of a graveyard of the past, for a big tear at this stage of her narrative, went rolling bodily into the uplifted wine-glass, and before she could recover herself, the little "cabbage" came running down stairs in a state of great terror.

"What is the matter, *mon chou*? Is madame worse?"

"O, grandmère, she is in agonies! and mademoiselle wishes to have a doctor."

We offered our services, and followed the "little cabbage" up stairs, and in the few moments that we waited for the acceptance of our services, we had time to take a survey of the apartment. It was naked in the extreme; but the few articles of furniture were arranged with so much taste and neatness, as almost to give it an air of comfort; and a bouquet of common flowers which Justine had that morning brought from the market of the Madeleine was placed in a vase in a window. The partition between the two rooms was very thin, and we could hear the feeble voice of the sick lady.

"Great God! is everything gone, my child, that you should sacrifice your beautiful hair?"

"It is no sacrifice, my dear mother, and it will be stronger than ever before you will be able to walk out with me."

As we entered, Marie looked at us as if striving to recall our features, and then whispered to her

passed over to the bedside of the sick lady, and saw that Marie was right. Her hair *would* be stronger than ever, before her mother would be able to walk out with her.

The poor lady seemed exhausted by recent exertion; but in a short time she rallied, and murmured,—"I feel it is too late, my darling; may heaven repay your devotion!"

Marie looked at us inquiringly. We took the sick woman's hand, and felt that the pulse beat feebly. Her mind began to wander in a light and unconnected manner, and her eyes were growing dull, and dallying with vacuity. We saw that the patient was suffering from the reaction of her late excitement; but we were conscious that a few hours more would hand her over to the grave, and we could only give her a little stimulant. Marie's eyes intuitively read our verdict, and we saw the big tears rapidly chasing each other down her cheeks, while she gently smoothed the sufferer's pillow, and whispered words of hope, which it cost her agonies to affect.

After a little while the poor lady seemed a little to revive, and Marie became almost importunate with her tender offices; but she was interrupted by the entrance of the "little cabbage," who stole quietly into the room, and whispered a few words to Marie.

"Tell monsieur," said the latter, "that we cannot see him now. Will he call again?"

"Grandmère has told him that madame is very ill, but he says that his business is urgent," replied the cabbage.

The conversation was carried on in a whisper, but madame caught the purport. Her eyes brightened with a feverish brilliance, and she said in a voice, strong for her—

"What is that, my child? Let monsieur enter—who knows?" The last two words were uttered in a lower tone than the rest, as though they were the result of some thought flashing across her mind.

We stood passive. For although we knew the irruption of an urgent visitor was a matter of serious apprehension, we were aware that the duration of the poor lady's existence could at worst be affected by but a few hours, and we met the glance of Marie with a silent assent. The "little cabbage" disappeared, and in a few moments returned, ushering in a tall man, far gone in years, whose demeanour stamped him as belonging to the higher ranks of society. He was clothed in deep mourning, and his face, which must have been handsome in his youth, was expressive of considerable haughtiness, overlaid and softened by the traces of painful suffering. We offered to withdraw, but Marie wished us to remain, and the stranger did not object. As he moved across the room to the bedside of madame, we whispered her perilous condition, and Marie looked up from her mother's side imploringly.

"Mama is very ill, monsieur," said she.

"I am grieved to hear it," rejoined the stranger, in a low tremulous voice, not unmusical.

At the sound of his voice, madame, who had fallen into an attitude of rest, made an effort to raise herself upon her arms, and looked steadfastly

the past. The stranger observed the effort, and spoke again in his low nervous tone—

"Madame does not know me."

"I have not that pleasure, monsieur," said she, with apparent diffidence of her memory.

"You are Madame St. Auliere; and this," pointing to Marie, "is your child."

"You are right, monsieur. What then?"

"It is also my name," he replied, and he paused, as if waiting for the effect, or to master his feelings.

Madame's eyes lighted up as if by the kindling of an inward fire. A superhuman effort of will gave her momentary strength, and with almost a spring she raised herself in her bed, and, looking fixedly at the stranger, exclaimed—

"I see, it is true, you are the father of my husband—"

"And I am come to ask that the past may be forgotten, and to offer my regrets and my assistance. Will you accept them, and allow me to take up my duties as a parent?"

There was something like a glow of happiness on the flushed face of madame as she glanced towards Marie, and rejoined—

"Be it so, for his child's sake. For me it comes too late. We have struggled long, and you have been very hard, monsieur."

"My son was disobedient, and I was proud, but I am humbled; for I am left alone, and have long sought my lost child. Let those of us that remain, speak only of the future."

These words were broken in their utterance, and it was evident that the speaker was suffering from violent emotion. Marie sat listening to the dialogue without uttering a word. Her face reflected the pleasure felt by her mother at this late reconciliation; but it was veiled and darkened by the anxiety she felt for her dying parent. Her arms were tenderly twined round her mother like a vine around the decayed tree which the next gale shall lay prostrate. She gazed wistfully in her mother's face, and once almost fancied that the new hopes which had dawned upon their prospects had imparted fresh vitality to the sinking frame within her arms, but the illusion was only transitory. Mortality had gathered its supporters together for one last grand struggle with the champion of immortality, and the victory remained with the powers of the spirit world. Ere her grandfather had done speaking, Marie felt a shiver pass through the frame of her mother, which was the precursor of death. Her arms were suddenly called upon for additional support, and she gazed with a terrified look upon the bloodless cheeks and closed eyes of her mother, and then silently appealed to us. We saw that the sufferer had ceased to suffer; and that the angels were about to lead home another fugitive from its earthly prison, and we unwound the poor girl's arms from the almost breathless clay.

The patient was soon beyond the reach of worldly ministrations. Her pulse ceased to indicate the presence of life, and the brightest mirror would have passed unstained over her mouth. She was gone, and we retired from the presence of the grief that was too holy to be witnessed by a stranger.

When we descended, we found Justine all anxiety regarding the patient and her visitor. She scanned our features with an almost ludicrous mixture of curiosity and earnestness, and, with a volubility considerably accelerated by the remnant of our second bottle of wine, her questions followed each other with the haste of a flock of sheep, with a dog at their heels.

"Was madame better? Was monsieur, the visitor, an old friend? Did mademoiselle comfort herself tranquilly?"

We answered the first question in its order of precedence, and a single expression took possession of her face.

"Great God! and is it so, monsieur? And mademoiselle—?"

"Is with her grandfather," we rejoined.

"Did monsieur say 'her grandfather?'"

We replied in the affirmative.

"I see; Heaven is at length mindful of its own. Then monsieur will care for her, and the shorn lamb shall not be driven out into the wilderness," exclaimed Justine.

We promised to call next day to inquire after Marie, and we kept our word. The wrinkles in Justine's cheeks seemed to have very recently been the channels of an unwonted flow of water, which, in subsiding, had left the usual tide-marks on the banks. Mademoiselle, said she, had passed a wretched night. She had been desolate, inconsolable; but monsieur, *son grandpère*, was prodigal of his sympathy, and the poor child was growing more reconciled to her loss.

"After the funeral," said Justine, "they will retire to the chateau of monsieur, where Marie is to take the place of her deceased grandmother in the household. But I know not how long this arrangement will last," continued she, "for events crowd in rather thickly at present. Marie has received by this day's post a letter from her affianced, who is recovered, and about to return home to establish his health. He is a captain of his regiment now, and will not quietly submit to see his favourite conscript becoming the follower of another."

A few days subsequently we received a handsome mourning ring from Marie's grandfather, accompanied by a note containing warm, but unearned thanks from herself, and we have treasured both until now, as mementos of one of the most painful incidents in our professional career.

TRAINS AND TRAMWAYS.

THE aristocracy of Marylebone have rushed to the rescue, and the projected train is off the line for the present. Lord Portman heads the onslaught in defence of vested rights, though the inhabitant householders of Gloucester Place, Portman Square, acknowledge "that private interest must yield to public convenience when a clear case is made out."

Lord Portman and his clients are quite right in defending themselves from injury; and we may go further than that, and add that they ought to have compensation for any proven injury—as in the case of railways—which may occur from benefitting the public. Only, they must not be compensated first, and discover afterwards that

the supposed injury has put their property at a premium, as has been the case with many railways.

Now, what are the public advantages to be obtained—we will not say by tramways—but by some system of road improvement which shall enable the public to ride in a better class of carriages as a matter of convenience? First, a saving of 75 per cent. in the cost of haulage, and 50 per cent. in drivers and conductors, putting that extra profit into the pockets of the proprietors. Or—Secondly, extending the sphere of riding to a far larger class of the population, and all this without in any way interfering with the public convenience as regards other vehicles or foot passengers.

What are the objections made?

1. That Mr. Train's system will make a nuisance by reason of monster omnibuses.

Not proven; inasmuch as one omnibus is less nuisance than two. But, in truth, Mr. Train's specific system is neither more nor less than a very bad class of railway, with a very heavy railway carriage on it, drawn by horses instead of an engine. It is likely to prove a nuisance only by means of mechanical inefficiency.

2. That the streets chosen are not wide enough to permit the railway carriage to pass along the centre, while leaving way enough on each side for the passage of other carriages.

If this be so, the result would be mischievous, aggravating its mechanical deficiencies.

3. That the present small omnibuses "run at such a pace, and at such a rate of charge, as to meet the requirements of all classes." They who make this statement are probably good easy people who never experienced the curse of Robert Burns "making a guinea do the work of five pounds." If the poor could ride three miles for a penny instead of twopenny, they would express a very strong opinion on this matter, and claim to be better judges than the richer classes in the matter of their especial vehicular conveyance.

No one with a sense of justice will say that the wealthy classes should be deprived without reason of their ease and convenience; but one thing is quite clear. The whole of the streets, save some portion of the parks, and the special reservations of the Duke of Bedford and others, are open to every kind of vehicle, and the omnibuses select those streets where a sufficient number of customers are to be picked up along the line of route. Baker Street, of course, comes under this category.

Now, of all noisy vehicles, an omnibus is about the worst. It is a contrivance to create noise; and the process of noise creation, jumping from stone to stone, produces a mass of dust in dry weather, and mud in wet weather. Whether as regards noise, or dust, or dirt, Mr. Train's carriage running on a rail would be comparatively noiseless, and free from all dirt nuisance; and were the experiment tried with the omnibuses one day, and the rail carriage next, it is very certain that the inhabitants, if polled, would give their suffrages in favour of the latter; the difference would be as great as that between wood pavement and stone pavement, though subject to disadvantages of other kinds.

Mr. Train's system is unquestionably a clumsy

one, but it is not on that ground that the objections are made against it. It is simply because they do not understand it that persons raise objections against it. If the objectors once understood the theory and principle of traction, their objections would cease. It is the roughness of a road of stone in blocks or Macadam that causes the noise and vibration. To this the objectors will probably reply that all railways are noisy and vibrative. But a railway carriage moving at seven miles per hour is comparatively noiseless and free from vibration. It is the question of speed: the rough road at a slow speed is as noisy as a smoother road at higher speed. This may be experienced by riding in an omnibus over the smooth granite trams in Broad Street when Cheap-side pavement is taken up.

How many of the readers of this paper will get these facts into their brains, that a smooth road is a less nuisance than a rough one, and that an ordinary omnibus would lose half its noisome qualities by running on a smooth surface, and save half the cost of horse flesh and human labour? Perhaps five per cent. of my readers will realise this in their minds, and then throw down the paper and think no more of it. The ninety-five others will go on believing that a street railway is a nuisance—until they see it realised.

The first move towards success will be to coin some new word, eschewing the words "rail" and "tram" altogether, and getting some rolling Greek phrases that will set up new ideas, purging these ninety-five brains of all the perilous stuff therein gathered. The next move will be to get a lecturer to visit all the parishes with a model apparatus to demonstrate the practical fact of the superiority of a smooth surface, whether for passengers, for horses, for proprietors, or for paving-boards; after that, a special piece of ground should be selected for a six months' trial. No other process can get over the prevailing prejudices. And it is to be feared that the imperfect contrivances, introduced by Mr. Train, will rather retard than forward this most important question of transit. People will assume that all systems must necessarily be imperfect, because one has been imported which is capable of further improvement.

W. B. A.

A CASKET OF RINGS.

Amelus told me 'twas all about a little ring.

A ring the princess threw away, and I took up.

JOHN FORD.

It may well be a matter of surprise and wonder that Sir Thomas Browne, whose searching wit and lively fancy-found quincunxes lavishly scattered everywhere by the providence or caprice of nature, never took in hand the still richer theme of a Ring. He might have charmed contemporaries and posterity alike, by employing on a congenial topic his quaint imagination and his learned diction, whilst he displayed his subtle mind and his extensive reading. He might have directed our attention to the stars of heaven and the worms of earth, and showed us rings encircling both. He might have pointed to the persons of savage and civilised man, to the tails of serpents and apes, to the necks of birds, to the skins of

one of the most ferocious and one of the most gentle animals which inhabit the wilds of Africa, to the green sward, to the leaves of trees. He might have enlarged upon the manifold uses of the ring in human societies—either simply as an ornament to the person, or as a means of authenticating the owner's will and wish; or as coin passing from hand to hand in commercial dealings; or as a significant symbol in momentous proceedings; or as an amulet averting disease and misfortune; or as an aid in divining the unrolled, unwritten secrets of the future. He might have entertained us with an account of the marvellous properties which superstition in various ages ascribed to rings, and he might have noticed the changes in shape and mode of wearing which, as personal ornaments, they have undergone at the fickle will of fashion. As a physician, doubtless, he wore a ring in compliance with the precepts of Hippocrates and Galen; and, after describing it, he might have agreeably indulged his discursive intellect in digressions as to the metal of which it was composed, the precious stone which adorned it, or the inscription which compressed within a few letters a lucid truth or a dark mystery.

Far be from us the presumption of attempting what the learned humourist left undone. Yet there can be no harm, perhaps, if we offer a contribution in the manner of a *mémoire pour servir* for the use of the future historian, to be honourably mentioned, or silently passed by in his luminous pages, as our humble performance may deserve. And the subject well demands its own historian; for within the magic circle of a little ring how many things of deep importance to the whole human race have been performed; out of its diminutive compass how much of weal and woe to individuals has issued!

Associations connected with rings crowd into the memory from history, from fiction, from art. The costly ring of Polycrates, that was as little to be got rid of as his destiny; Rogero's, in the "Orlando Furioso;" Abdaldar's, which when cast into the gulf, "A skinny hand came up, and caught it as it fell, and peals of devilish laughter shook the cave;"* Borgia's poisoned ring; Camilla and Gil Blas; Boccaccio's story of the three rings, told by the Jew to the Mahometan, which has been thought to shadow the doubts of a sceptic; the unseemly wager between Posthumus and Iachimo, when the former staked his wife's honour and a jewelled ring "dear as his finger;" Isabella, disposing of her wedding-ring, described in a passage of "The Fatal Marriage," which when read by the amiable Sophia Western, the book dropped from her hand, and a shower of tears ran down into her bosom; the antique ring of massive gold "with a cameo most beautifully executed, bearing the head of Cleopatra," presented as a peace-offering to the Antiquary by his nephew; the ruby ring which Charles II., disguised as a gipsy woman, dropped into Alice Lee's pitcher;† and a thousand others of more or less celebrity. But to indulge in general allusions will conduce little to the amusement or instruction of the reader, and with these objects in view we must treat the matter with greater particularity.

The early history of the ring, like that of all important things, is involved in obscurity; but we can readily believe that the rude pleasure received by the eyes from bright and glittering objects would induce the primitive denizens of the earth to construct ornamental appendages of an annular form as soon as they had acquired sufficient skill to cut stone or cast metal. Tubal Cain was the earliest artificer in brass or iron; and Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the first maker of rings on record. Rings are mentioned in the "Odyssey." It was a condition imposed by Penelope on her importunate suitors, that they should shoot an arrow from the bow of the absent Ulysses through twelve rings, alternately of silver and brass, placed in a line. This task they were unable to perform: but when the wandering chief, returning in disguise, drew the cord, his shaft flashed through them all. Pliny refers to the practice of wearing rings, more than once, and after alluding to the labours undertaken with the view of extracting metal from the bowels of the earth, and precious stones from their bed, he exclaims, "How many hands are harassed that a single member of the hand may look gay!"

Amongst the oldest rings in existence may be mentioned that of Cheops, the builder of the Great Pyramid, which was found in a tomb near that stupendous erection. It is of gold, with hieroglyphics.* Various rings with Runic inscriptions have been found both in this country and in Scandinavia. They are now safely deposited in museums, and some of them have been dissertated upon by our antiquarians.

Many ancient rings have been preserved, and have at length found their way into the cabinets of collectors, on account of their reputed power to guard their wearers from harm—a power residing more perhaps in the stone than in the setting. According to an Eastern writer, the precious stones are all influential in their several ways: thus, the diamond cures madness, and soothes vain fears; the ruby dispels melancholy bodings, and ensures honourable place; the emerald prevents ill dreams, and cures the palsy; the sapphire averts the operation of enchantments; and the turquoise enlivens the eye, and heals the bite of poisonous reptiles. The Persian name of the turquoise is "Father of Isaac." Now it will be remembered, that the ring Shylock had from Leah when he was a bachelor, was set with this stone: the ring that he declared he would not have exchanged for a wilderness of monkeys, when he heard how his daughter, after her elopement, had given it for one. Are we to suppose that the turquoise was by tradition a stone peculiarly Jewish? It does not, however, appear to have been set in any one of the four rows of stones which composed Aaron's mysterious breast-plate. From a passage in one of Donne's poems, it seems that it told the state of the wearer's health by changing colour:

As a compassionate turquoise that doth tell,
By looking pale, the wearer is not well.

And Ben Jonson, when describing some parasites of Sejanus, says that they were accustomed to

* Thalaba (book v.).

† Woodstock.

* "Englishwoman in Egypt."

Observe him as his watch observes his clock,
And true as turquoise in the dear lord's ring,
Look well or ill with him.

The ring given to Camball, by his sister Canace (Faery Queen, book iv.), had not only the virtue of staunching wounds, but of restoring the weariness of the spirit and the wasting of the bodily powers in battle:

Through working of the stone therein y-set.

When the murder of Andrew of Hungary, husband of Joanna Queen of Naples, had been resolved upon, the deed was effected in this wise: the royal couple being absent from their capital on a hunting expedition, it was reported that despatches had arrived from Naples which required instant attention; and when allured by the false intelligence from his apartment into the corridor, he was attacked by the assassins. But as they believed that a ring given him by his mother was a talisman against death by sword or poison, they tied a silken cord round his neck, and completed the work of strangulation by pushing him out of the window.

Various other curious properties have been attributed to rings, either by the credulous fancy of the populace, or the creative fancy of poets. Everyone has heard of Gyges, King of Lydia, who had a ring which was said to possess the virtue of rendering him invisible when he turned it in his hand, without depriving him of the power of seeing others. In later days, there was a tradition that one Keddie, a tailor, found in a cavern in the hill of Kinnoul, near Perth, a ring possessing a similar property to that of Gyges. This gothic version of the classic tale is told by Sir Walter Scott, in a note to his "Fair Maid of Perth." In the story of the Tartar king, "Cambuscan bold," it is related that when the monarch was sitting at a feast on the anniversary of his birthday, a knight came riding into the hall on a steed of brass,

Upon his thumb he had of gold a ring;

which he brought along with a mirror to Canace, the king's daughter, from the King of Arabia and Inde. She was told that the virtue of this "queinte ring" when borne on her thumb, or carried in her purse, consisted in enabling her to understand the language of birds, to reply in a manner intelligible to them, and to know the medicinal powers of all plants.* In Wilhelm Meister's Travels, the story of the New Melusina relates how the daughter of Eckwald, king of the dwarfs, waxed by virtue of a monstrous ring, that lay in the royal treasury, to the full dimensions of a mortal. It took four-and-twenty dwarfs to lift it; but it no more than fitted her finger when she had attained the stature of a mortal. The same ring had had the opposite property of transforming a man to the size of a pigmy, as the garrulous barber experienced who had the fortune to become Melusina's husband. An instance of the supernatural powers popularly reputed to belong to particular rings may be found in Fletcher's "Loyal Subject,"—a play first performed about 1618. A ring is represented as given by the

Duke of Muscovia to Alinda, his sister's waiting-maid; the poem was, "The jewel's set within." Alinda smiles on receiving it, from thinking "what strange spells these rings have, and how they work with some." Afterwards, she affects to feel its influence, and exclaims, "Sure there's a witchcraft in this ring!" We may quit this part of the subject by reminding the classical scholar that the Greeks had a scheme of divination by rings enchanted, or constructed after some position of the stars; and this they called *Δακτυλομαντεία*.

From the earliest times of which we have any record, the ring was held emblematic of power and authority. We hear of honourable place being conferred by the simple gift of a ring, just as the British Chancellor receives his appointment by the mere delivery of the Great Seal. Alexander the Macedonian, when stretched on his death-bed, drew the ring from his finger, and gave it to Perdicas; thereby intimating, it is thought, that he bequeathed his vast empire to that General, and appointed him his successor. Perdicas conceived that his title would be fortified by another ring, for he married Alexander's sister, Cleopatra. His competitors, however, were too strong for him; and, after he had been ruined in fortune, he was assassinated in his tent by his own officers. Who took possession of Alexander's ring, history does not inform us. It is well known that the Roman knights wore a gold ring, presented to them at the public expense. It is an instance of the humanity or the dissimulation of Julius Cæsar, that when the Egyptians, after the battle of Pharsalia, brought to him Pompey's head and ring (he was a knight) Cæsar wept. Perhaps he recollected with tenderness the intimacy of their former friendship; perhaps he was suddenly struck by the idea of the instability of human grandeur; perhaps he thought the act would tell upon his soldiers. When a Roman slave received his liberty, his master bestowed upon him a white robe, a cap, and a ring. In a curious account of the Ceremonies and Services at the English Court in the time of Henry VIII., printed from an ancient manuscript in the Antiquarian Repertory, there are some directions as to the proceedings in the creation of a prince. "The prince shall be brought in and presented before the king in his estat, in the abit of a prince, between two dukes, before him his sword borne by a duke or an erle, on the left side the rings. The king shall first put upon him his sword, after the rings on the left finger." A ring formed part of the peculiar attire of the Roman bishops; and in our own church it still appears at the ceremonies which take place on the occasion of an episcopal investment. The privilege of wearing a ring became an object of ambition to haughty abbots, who witnessed with an ill grace any marks of superior dignity on the persons of others. In the records of the abbey of Glastonbury, there is a grant from Pope Alexander VI. to the abbot, of the right to wear a mitre and a ring; and the muniment room of other monasteries could show similar documents.

How the ring came to be used at the celebration of the marriage rite does not clearly appear, but it is believed that at first it formed no part of

the actual ceremony, being merely one of the *epousalia*, gifts made to many persons at the time of entering into a solemn engagement as a testimony of the contract. It may be remarked that, among the Romans, a ring was frequently handed over by way of earnest at the closing of a bargain. One of the most singular marriage-contracts in which the ring was introduced was that annual alliance of the city of Venice to the sea, which dated from the year 1176. On Ascension Day in every year the Doge sailed in his splendid galley—the Bucentaur—into the Adriatic amongst the palaces that had their origin in dirt and seaweed, and let a ring fall into the water, whilst he pronounced the words “Desponsamus te, Mare, in signum veri perpetuæ dominii.” Alas! the presumption of man that dares to speak of the lastingness of aught belonging to him, most of all when the possession he boasts of is dominion!

Connected with this ceremony we may refer to the fresco-painting executed by the Bellini for the Hall of Council in the Doge's palace, in one of which the Doge Grimani was represented in the act of receiving from the Pope the gold ring to be used in his espousal of the Adriatic. We may recall this picture the more appropriately since, like the observance it was designed to commemorate, it is transferred into the list of things that were: it was destroyed by fire in 1577.

It is a flat truism to say that of all earthly things, fortune excepted, fashion has had the widest reign, and taken to herself the greatest privilege of fickleness. Could it be expected that the ring would escape her influence? Not only have rings been worn on fingers of the hand, but on the wrists, arms and ankles, in the nose and ears; not only have they been made of metal, but of glass, stone, wood, ivory; and, in short, of every substance which can be shaped into the annular form. Rings in the nose were once worn by the Israelitish women, but are now confined to savages and pigs. We have been more reconciled to the sight of rings in the ears of men (it is a common custom amongst the lower classes on the continent to wear them thus) since we learned that our own Shakespeare adopted the fashion; at least if the accuracy of the portrait once belonging to Lord Ellesmere may be trusted. At all events this mode of wearing rings was common amongst the gallants of Shakespeare's day. When Master Matthew (Every Man in his Humour, 1596) was in straits for money, he offered to pawn the jewel in his ear. The thumb at some periods has been adorned with a ring. We think there is a story of a Roman lady who was wont to slip one of her husband's rings upon her wrist and wear it as a bracelet.

In the early part of the last century it is stated in the British Apollo, to have been the custom to place the ring in the ceremony of marriage upon the fourth finger, but afterwards to wear it on the thumb.

“Multis hoc modis, ut cætera omnia, luxuria variavit, gemmas addendo exquisiti fulgoris, census opinio digitos onerando sicut dicemus in gemmarum volumine, mox et effigies varias cælando, ut alibi ars, alibi sententia esset in pretio.” Such is the elegant language of Pliny, and

he proceeds to detail some of the modes of wearing that, the various shapes of which he had summarily alluded to. The Gauls and Britons, he says, placed the ornament on the middle finger, whereas, in his day at Rome, that was the only finger on which it was not carried. In the seventeenth century a fashion prevailed in England of having a skull cut on the stone, a mode dictated by the same feeling, one would think, that induces a tobacco-smoker to have the bowl of his bookah carved in the shape of a grinning caput mortuum. Among the whimsical figures to which the countenance of the pedant Holofernes is likened by the merry lords in “Love's Labour Lost,” is a death's face in a ring. He is going to deliver a grave speech in an assumed character before the Princess and her court, and being repeatedly interrupted, he declares he will not be put out of countenance by them. Because, says Biron, thou hast no face. What is this? replies the unlucky schoolmaster, pointing to that part of his person which answered to the visage of other people, and immediately a bushel of derisive similitudes was showered upon him.

Young, in a passage, condemning the frivolous pursuits of life in the presence of its awful realities, represents man as attired—

In all the fruitless fopperies of life,
And raffing for the Death's head on the ring.

Many (said Robinson, Bishop of Bangor, in one of his sermons) carry death on their fingers when he is never nigh their hearts. A ring made of two entwined, and hence called gimmel ring (*gemelha*, a twin), was at one time in use, as we are reminded by a passage here and there in our old plays. Thus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's “Beggar's Bush”—

Hub. Sure I should know that gimmel.

Jac. 'Tis certain he—I had forgot my ring, too.

There is an allusion now and then occurring amongst the writers of that period which we do not altogether understand. When a dame was crossed in love we find her straightway employed in making rings of rushes. The tailor's daughter, in the “Two Noble Kinsmen,” is an instance; and again we are told that Phædrus, whilst in her boat lousy with “vaine toyces,” devised some “gaudy girdlands” and “rings of rushes.” (Faery Queen, Book ii, 77.) The usage no longer obtains with us of engraving an inscription on the ring, but formerly it was not complete unless it had its *posy*, a word which was probably derived from *poësis*, a poetical maxim. Old Udal spells it *poysse*, which brings it very near the Greek word.

The composition of an apt motto was deemed no dishonourable task by the great wits of a by-gone age, and their pens seemed to have been guided by a rule something like that given by Sir Toby to his friend Sir Andrew for the composition of his challenge. “Be brief; it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent and full of invention.” When Jacques and Orlando met in the forest—neither of them in the humour for wordy politeness—such was the epigrammatic pithiness of

Orlando's sentences that the world-sick courtier surmises he had been acquainted with goldsmiths' wives, and had conned his answers out of rings! The weeping maiden, in Shakespeare's "Lovers' Complaint," is seen tearing letters in the extremity of her grief, and we are told that she

Cracked many a ring of poised gold and bone.

The practice of thus inscribing rings was a widely-extended one. It obtains at this day amongst the Chinese, with whom the single word "Patience" is a favourite motto.

But the ring has not always been merely an ornament or a plaything; it has had its uses, and has frequently performed notable service. Its use, as a signet, dates from very early times, and in that character it is often mentioned in the narratives of the Bible. Cicero has the expression—"imprimere sigilla annulo." The Pope has a ring which is called the Fisherman's ring, because it bears the representation of Peter as a fisherman. It is used to seal the Papal briefs—instruments of less importance than bulls. When the Pope dies the Cardinal Chamberlain breaks the ring, and the city of Rome presents the succeeding occupant of St. Peter's chair with a new one. The peculiar authenticity ascribed to impressions of signets has led to their being often employed to effect a sinister purpose both in real life and in fiction. The atrocious violence to which the virtuous wife of a Roman senator fell a victim was accomplished, it will be remembered, by the Emperor Valentinian, by means of her husband's signet ring.

Another use of rings was, as we have already hinted, in the way of money. Ancient ring-money found in various parts of the island, may be seen in the British Museum: and bronze rings used for a similar purpose have been disinterred in Ireland.

Antiquarians are of opinion that large rings of gold, occasionally dug up in Scandinavia, were used at the ceremony of administering an oath.

Some persons have been known to carry poison secreted under the stone; Demosthenes is said to have been one of them, so that he had always a means of terminating his existence in that which seemed to others nothing but an innocent ornament.

As gifts and marks of affection, rings have figured largely in the intercourse of society. If a monarch desires to express his acknowledgments for the politeness of his inferiors, he thinks he does it most suitably by the gift of a diamond ring. If a lover wishes to intimate the strength or purity and endlessness of affection for his mistress, and at the same time to prefigure the knot which he hopes will hereafter bind them together, is it not all done by the present of a ring?

Fair sweet, if you desire to know,
And would the meaning understand,
Wherefore on you I do bestow
This ring of gold with heart in hand,
Read these few lines that are behind,
And there my meaning you shall find.*

How often has a ring been intended to typify

* A sonnetta from a collection of poems principally by Thomas Delany, printed 1807.

the lasting force of a friendship the frailty of which a few months exposed. Amongst the Latin poems of Buchanan are some lines on a ring set with a diamond, presented by Queen Elizabeth to her dear cousin Mary Queen of Scots. The spotless lustre of the stone and its adamantine hardness, however, betokened something very different from the feelings which were meant to be expressed, or the qualities meant to be imaged, and the aspirations with which the poem concluded in the name of the ring—if Fate ordains that it should link each to the other with a chain as of adamant never to be broken by the attacks of envy, hatred, malice or time, then would it be the happiest, the most celebrated, and the most estimable of jewels—proved as fallacious as any human desire, as baseless as any human prophecy, has ever been. One of the large pictures in the Luxembourg Palace (from which we may obtain an excellent idea of the modern French school of High Art) should be mentioned as representing an episode in history in which the ring was an actor. Every one knows that Francis I. fell into the hands of the Emperor Charles V. at the battle of Pavia, and was kept a prisoner for some months in Spain. Subsequently, Charles, being desirous of visiting his Flemish dominions, asked permission of Francis to pass through his kingdom, which was granted. On his road he was entertained at Fontainebleau with great splendour. Some of the king's friends exhorted him to take this opportunity of retaliating upon the emperor by seizing his person, and amongst them was the Duchess d'Etampes. Charles being conscious of his dangerous position, thought it prudent to gain the woman over to his interests by some species of bribe. One day, when preparing to wash his hands before seating himself at table, he drew from his finger a ring of great value, and purposely let it fall near the duchess, who picked it up from the floor and presented it to the owner. "No, madame," said he, "the ring is in a hand too beautiful for me to take it again." The trick answered its purpose; but the duchess was not the only one with whom Charles had to contend. When the Court jester—"a fellow wise enough to play the fool, a practice," says Viola, "as full of labour as a wise man's art"—laid a list of fools before the king, it was found to be headed with the emperor's name as being fool enough to put himself into the clutches of his adversary.

"But," said Francis, "if I allow him to pass free, what then?"

"Why, then," said the jester, "I shall strike out his name and write yours in its place."

We have seen that the ring is present at the most important act which a man performs in his course from the cradle to the grave. It appears once more at the last scene of all. This time, however, it is tricked with black, and glitters not with jewels, its sole ornament being a short and mournful admonition. Those who are acquainted with the history of the Spectator's country knight (and who is not?) will remember that he left rings by his will for every one in the club.

Amongst our collection of annular curiosities we must not omit to mention that a diminutive watch has sometimes taken the place of the jewel

in a ring. George III. was presented by a London watchmaker with a ring thus ornamented. The watch was less than a silver twopence, and, though it had no fewer than one hundred and twenty-five several parts, it weighed only seven grains more than five pennyweights. Charles V. of Germany and James I. of England had rings ornamented in a similar manner, and in the museum at Dresden is to be seen a ring set with a minute horologe.

Amongst the accumulations of elegant and fantastic shapes into which stone and precious metal are found carved in the cabinets of princes or in national museums may often be seen rings whose claim to preservation is that they have been worn by some illustrious departed. In the public library at Wolfenbüttel are Luther's marriage and doctor's rings; and Prince Metternich's museum at Königswart contains the rings of Matthæus Corvinus and John Sobieski.

A few miscellaneous references to art, verbal and pictorial, where this ornament is introduced being given we shall cease to task the reader's patience. In the hands of a true artist it is a powerful instrument in telling his story or heightening its effect. When Hogarth wished to expose the wretched passion of avarice in an old man who had bartered away the happiness of his daughter for an alliance with a titled spendthrift, he painted him drawing off the ring from her fingers as she lay in the extremity of death. To shift the scene—Dante deemed not fully apparelled the hand of the woman, to whom he offered the

precious incense of his verse, without a ring on one of the tender fingers. And in Suckling's gay lines on a wedding he must needs exhibit to us the slender delicacy of the bride's hand by telling us that—

Her finger was so small the ring
Would not stay on which they did bring,
It was too wide a peck.

In Massinger's "Great Duke of Florence" we see Sanazarro, a prisoner in a lonely chamber of a country mansion, conveying to the Duchess of Urbino, who was in love with him, a notice of his condition and a petition that she would intercede for his liberation, by writing on a pane of glass with a ring which she had given him, and flinging it at her feet. Remember the astonishment of the poor fisherman and his wife when Undine left their cottage for a moment and came back with two costly rings, one of which she gave to the storm-bewildered knight Sir Huldbrand, and kept the other herself.

We must now shut down the lid upon the contents of our little casket, which have been collected and arranged for the inspection of our friends in the hope that it would afford them pleasure to see grouped together some of the

jewels

That on the stretched forefinger of all time
Sparkle for ever.

Our fair readers especially will appreciate the purpose to which little Dan Cupid is putting the ring in our tailpiece.



NOW, AND THEN.

BIRDS are singing on bush and tree,
Singing a thousand loves and joys;
Once, it was music sweet to me,
Now, it seemeth only noise.
Ah! life's music fled with him!

Roses are blooming—once they were
Fairest of wonders that Nature weaves;
Now their perfume makes faint the air,

And, to me, they are just—red leaves.
Ah! life's beauty faded with him!

Daylight dies, and the stars arise,
Not as of old with hope-giving light;
Then, they looked loving, like human eyes,
Now, they are pitiless, cold, and bright.
Ah! the brightest star has set!

ANNA HADGON.

LAST WEEK.

THE HOLY ALLIANCE.

CAN it be true that we are really back in those times when the Emperors of Russia and Austria, and the King of Prussia, were represented in old engravings as embracing each other, and vowing eternal fidelity to the sublime principle that the nations of the earth were created for the use of kings? Even so far back as the year 1815, either the free air of England or the prudence of Lord Castlereagh had sufficient force to prevent the Prince Regent from joining such an alliance as this. On the continent of Europe, Prince Metternich and Madame Krüdener, and the Prussian diplomatists, and the statesmen of the Restoration in Paris were allowed to have things their own way, and for fifteen long years the heavings of the great earthquake were checked. The constitutions promised to the German nations were withheld, and in their place the Diet at Frankfort—that last expression of German pedantry and ever-meddling tyranny—was established as an actual institution. The Russian Emperor carried out in practice his dream of universal freedom by riveting the last links of the chains on the unfortunate Poles. Francis of Austria, acting no doubt under the advice of Metternich, deprived the estates of his various provinces of the last remains of self-government, and constituted himself the sole and irresponsible inquisitor and regulator of his empire. Recent events in Hungary, and in Lombardy more particularly, are the best illustrations of the value of this system of blind and elaborate tyranny. France was thrown back into the hands of the religious congregations, and that statesman best pleased his royal master who contrived to defraud the French nation of some portion of the liberty which had been promised to them upon the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte and the restoration of the old traditional dynasty. Old Marshal Soult might have been seen in those days walking in a religious procession, with a huge wax taper in his hand, and all but intoning those set forms of French adjuration, which are more in harmony with the energy of camps than with the solemnities of the church. Louis XVIII. was wheeled about from his chamber to his carriage in a chair of marvellous construction, and quoted scraps of Horace, now at his brother, and now at his people. The most French thing in France, in those times, was the immortal song of Béranger, who contrived that his countrymen should forget the edge, and remember only the glitter of the imperial sword. After all, expedition for expedition—one of Napoleon's little *promenades militaires* to Berlin or Vienna, was at least more flattering to the French love of glory than the wretched saunter from the Bidassoa to Cadiz. Battle for battle, Austerlitz or Jena, was well worth the day of the Trocadero. However, thus it was that kings and princes went on in those Lethæan times, which passed away, in all appearance, so calmly between the last struggle at Waterloo, and the three days of Barricades, when the old Epicurean philosopher of Hartwell had passed away, and a king equally despotic at heart, but a far less shrewd observer of the times blundered in his stead.

But these fifteen years of pause and hesitation were intelligible after those other twenty-five years of fire and sword. The nations of Europe were weary of revolutions, and camp-life, and captured cities, and the misery, and the splendour of an epoch when war was looked upon as the predominant affair of human life. In no country did this feeling so strongly prevail as in France. In the year 1814, when Napoleon had concluded his last campaign but one at Fontainebleau, the exhaustion of the country was so great, that on Sunday evenings when the villagers of France collected under their trees for their usual sports, the young maidens were obliged to dance together for want of partners. The youths who should have courted them in country fashion, and have led them to the altar, were sleeping their last sleep under the snows of Russia, or their bones were bleaching under the strong sun of Spain. France was fairly wearied out with the effort of a quarter of a century, and before all things had to recover a male population strong enough to re-assert the prerogative of the French name. Throughout Germany the hatred against France had been so intense, and the joy at having driven the invader back to his own side of the Rhine so great, that the nations were willing enough to trust to the promises of their princes, and to bide their time. Our fathers in England had enough to do in those evil days. Our statesmen were but too well inclined to take a lesson from the great continental professors of the art of tyranny. Lords Eldon and Sidmouth were not very fervent partisans of the development of liberal ideas. The harvests were bad. Strange theories about making bread dear that poverty-stricken men might have plenty of it were afloat. There was a general and eager craving for a reform of our political institutions. There was antagonism between bigoted Attorneys-General and reckless pamphleteers, and a general astonishment at the magnitude of our public burdens. In those days men had not formed a just estimate of what the British people could accomplish, so their ingenuity and their industry were not obstructed by unwise laws. However, there was enough to be done at home without looking about for fresh causes of offence. The Holy Alliance might be sneered at and jeered at, but no Englishman of sound mind dreamt of raising fresh subsidies, and enlisting more soldiers to combat a principle which might very fairly be left to work out its own destruction. We had intervened in the affairs of the continent to our hearts' content. Of Metternich and Eldon, and the ideas they represented, there is an end.

From 1830 to 1848 the march of political affairs was different. Europe was taught practically that there might be revolution without anarchy. It had been the policy of the old statesmen who had reestablished order in Europe, in other words, who had worked out its liberation from the military despotism of France, to establish it as a recognised axiom, that any resistance to constituted authority was but the commencement of fresh troubles upon the model of 1790. When the intelligence reached London, now a little more than thirty years ago, that fresh barricades had been erected in Paris, and that the people had obtained a vic-

tory over the Court and the army, people talked of the inauguration of a fresh Reign of Terror. We were to have Danton, Marat, Robespierre over again, and Fouquier-Tinville, and the death-cart, and the guillotine, and the insane chorus of revolutionary *tricolours*, singing their *ca-ira, ca-ira* song, with dry lips, and eyes greedy of blood. Very wise old gentlemen in the clubs of St. James's Street prophesied that what had been would be again, and that the "fall demon of revolution" once aroused, would run his course. Not much came of it. In place of the Committee of Public Safety and the Directory, and what not, we had that luxurious monarchy of July which began with one job and ended with another. Belgium followed the example of France, and certainly Europe has little cause to complain of troubles which have their origin in Brussels, save in so far as the circumspect and constitutional widower acts as the over-zealous tool of the German Courts in their negotiations with Great Britain. Unconsciously, King Leopold, hackneyed as he is in the ways of courts and diplomatists, may very possibly have been helping forward a great calamity. He has ruled his own little kingdom to admiration, but out of Belgium he has been the dynastic agent of the German sovereigns. Were it not that even now the German nations have but a scant idea of political liberty, we might contrast their conduct in 1848-49, very unfavourably with that of the Italians in the years 1859-60. The Italians have proved that they are more ready to make sacrifices of life and property than the Germans were twelve years ago, and yet the Germans affect to look down upon them as an inferior race. Italy will yet be a nation, and will occupy a grand place at the council table of Europe, before Germany has arrived at the conclusion that a union of despotism and pedantry is not the best possible form of government. But even in Germany what a change since 1830; and since 1815! From the Baltic to the Alps, and from the Rhine to the Russian borders it is no longer possible that men can be ruled upon the old system. In those lands the thinkers are a patient, meta-physical race enough, but even they can scarcely be stirred again to do battle for the old war-cries. They have been tricked and derided by their rulers too often; matchless as their forbearance is, it is worn thread-bare. It is not possible that they could be induced to make any fresh sacrifices for the perpetuation of principles which, however sacred in the eyes of their rulers, can scarcely be said to affect their own interests in any other than an injurious sense.

The other day the Emperor of Austria met his brother of Russia, and his brother of Prussia, at Warsaw; but what was the story which he had to tell? Of the two fairest provinces of his empire, one had just been torn from him by the fortune of war; the other was all but in open revolt. Such was the end of the policy of Metternich and Felix Schwarzenberg, and of the good old principles of "*Thorough*," as applied to Austrian affairs. Even the sturdy mountaineers of the Tyrol, who had been a bye-word in Europe for their blind attachment to the House of Hapsburg, have at last given way. The discontent is universal—the finances of the empire well-nigh exhausted—the

fresh conscriptions more and more intolerable from day to day. It is clear that Francis Joseph of Austria could not bring much strength to the confederacy. Then for the young Russian, the military might of his empire was exhausted in the Crimea, and in the weary death-marches of his regiments from one extremity of the Russian dominions to the other. Above all, the prestige of what our journalists used to call the Russian Colossus was quite overthrown. One of the most important—perhaps the most important result of the Crimean war—was to dispel all illusions upon that point. We can now tell accurately enough what force the Russians would be able to bring into the field beyond their own frontiers—what would be their resources for transport—how they would be armed—and how nourished—and, above all, upon what financial basis their operations must rest. Prussia, no doubt, remains intact, but she has suffered most grievously in character since her refusal to share in the honours and perils of the great European war of 1854-56. We cannot refuse to take into serious account the action of a Government which can bring so many disciplined troops into the field; but it may be said with perfect truth that, beyond the borders of this disjointed kingdom, not a single pulse in Europe throbs quicker, or harder, at the mention of the Prussian name. They have stood alone—so let them stand; if they are to fall alone, so let them fall. They would not stretch out a finger, nor risk a thaler, to help us in the hour of our need, so that henceforward in our dealings with them we shall only be guided by that prudent regard to our own interests, which, after all, is perhaps the basis of all wise action in human affairs. The Prussians have done much of late to make their name odious in the ears of Englishmen. One word upon this.

It is impossible to speak in terms of very high admiration of the conduct of many of our countrymen when they are taking their pleasure on the continent of Europe. Had it pleased any foreign gentleman—had it pleased the police of any foreign country to seize a peccant Briton who had been misconducting himself in any way during his European travels—Englishmen at home would have been the first to say, "By all means! The fellow is rightly served."

Let our own countrymen, however, bear their fair share of blame; or rather, let others bear their burdens as well as they. But the insolence of your French or German tourist travelling upon the continent of Europe is to the full upon a par with that of the Englishman. He is as aggressive upon the steamer or railway—as noisy and selfish at the hotel—more prying, more punctilious than your regular John Bull, with his plaid shooting-coat, and felt hat. However, to accuse others is not to free our own people from blame. If an English traveller had really misconducted himself in a railway carriage, we should have rejoiced to have seen him duly punished, even although all the French and German travellers of the same season had set him the example. But what was the truth of this wretched affair at Bonn, the other day? A railway train stops at the Bonn station; as

English traveller leaves his place in a railway carriage for a moment, and when he returns he finds it occupied by a German. He asks as well as he can for his seat, but his remonstrances are treated with contempt. Finally, he proceeds to eject the intruder from his seat. Such is the story as it is related, and of course it is impossible in strictness to justify the act of a man who takes the law into his own hands, in place of calling in the aid of the railway officials either in Germany or elsewhere. Our countryman is dragged off to gaol; in point of fact from one gaol to another; he is silenced when he endeavours to justify himself, and to throw the blame upon the intruder. The magistrate, in deciding upon the affair, in place of confining himself to the circumstances of the case, indulges in a tirade of vulgar abuse against England and the English; the substance of which was, that we were distinguished above all other nations for "shamelessness and black-guardism."

It is more than probable if any English magistrate had spoken in the same way from the justice-seat about the subjects of any foreign prince, that his dismissal from the office for which he had evinced his unsuitness would have been the instant result. Not so in Prussia. Although the Englishman aggrieved was a gentleman by station, and therefore a very unlikely person to have misconducted himself upon a public railway; and although he was attached to the court of our Queen, and therefore, as one would have supposed, he might have obtained a hearing at Berlin, all justice was denied. The act of the provincial magistrate was endorsed by his superiors, and the journals throughout the country were forbidden to speak of the transaction otherwise than by lending their assistance to abuse our countrymen. This, however, was not all. Even after this insult to a gentleman who was particularly attached to her service—and after this slur upon the nation of which she is the sovereign, Queen Victoria left our shores upon a visit to her daughter. Will it be believed, that when the Royal yacht which had been appointed to await the British Queen had reached Mayence, a parcel of raggamuffin custom-house and police officers actually offered to board her, in order to ascertain if there were any contraband goods in the boxes and cabins of the British Sovereign and her suite? The officer in command very properly refused to admit them on board—he would have deserved to have been pitched into the Rhine had he done otherwise—and told our Prussian friends that he was quite prepared to use force to resist their intrusion, if necessary. Whatever their true feeling may have been, the Prussian custom-house people shrank from absolutely attempting to board the Royal yacht by force, and telegraphed for orders to the upper powers. With unwonted courtesy, an order was sent back, granting immunity from search to the yacht which had conveyed the Queen of England upon a visit to the Prussian Court. Never in the history of nations will a record be found of such a coarse and unprovoked outrage upon the proprieties and decencies of public life. Never perhaps, until the Prussians led the way, was one sovereign, upon a visit to

another, made the subject of such an insult. Talk of the feelings of the French towards Englishmen! Louis Philippe, or Louis Napoleon, would have scorned to use the meanest servant in the suite of a Sovereign who was honouring his court with a visit, in the manner in which these Prussians have handled our Queen. It is only a nation committed to a selfish isolation which could make, to say the least, such a very great mistake.

But what is the meaning and what has been the result of this Warsaw meeting of the other day? What has come of this last attempt to replace the European system upon the basis of the old Holy Alliance of 1815? The question concerns us nearly, not only because such an alliance would infallibly lead to political complications in which England must be involved, but because it is said that Lord John Russell has in some measure given in his adhesion to Prussia. So great was the effect of the courtly solemnities recently enacted in Germany, even upon the mind of a man who has been matured in the free air of the British House of Commons. The fact seems incredible, yet it is certainly true, that the scolding letter of the Prussian Minister to the Sardinian Court was forwarded, if not composed, after the interview with the British Minister of Foreign Affairs. Now if there be one point in the political life of Great Britain in the year 1860 more clear than another, it is the total estrangement of ideas between ourselves and the rulers of Germany. They have failed us in the hour of our need, and their system of government—even granting that it is the wisest and best for the nations which dwell between the Rhine and the Russian Frontiers, the Baltic and the Alps—is so totally different from our own, that it cannot command our sympathy, nor even our adhesion. When we turn from the governments to the people, we find that we are cordially detested even by those whom we would gladly have assisted by all means in our power. When Felix Schwarzenberg was in power in Austria, and that is but twelve years ago, an Englishman was treated like a mad dog whenever he showed himself in the Austrian dominions. Not only was a chance traveller exposed to all the vexations and annoyances which could be inflicted upon him by the Custom House officers and the police, but he was even tabooed in the society of Vienna. English ladies, who were so unfortunate as to be engaged as governesses in that capital—aye, even English nurserymaids—were summarily discharged from their situations. Truly, when the apprehensions of Europe were recently aroused by the military ambition of the French Emperor, there was a slight renewal of familiarity—not of cordial relations—between the statesmen of Austria and Great Britain; but even of this there is an end. As soon as it was clear that the dislocation of the Austrian empire in the Italian peninsula was regarded in these islands with universal complacency, the Austrian Court turned from us once more, and, so far naturally enough, sought for sympathy and assistance in more congenial quarters. Hence the attempt to renew the old relations with the Cabinet of St. Petersburg. The instincts of despotism have re-united those whom the pressure of actual warfare had separated for the moment.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the name of England is acceptable even to the Austrian people. Oppressed, and dissatisfied with their rulers as they are, they have ever a bad word and an unkindly thought for us. To a certain extent this is intelligible in South Germany, inasmuch as the loss of the Italian provinces must be a subject of deep mortification even to those who wish ill to the Government. Had the Rebellion of 1798 been successful in Ireland, and had meetings been held at Vienna at the time for the purpose of expressing the sympathy of the Austrian people with the heroic efforts of the Irish people—had there been a shilling subscription for Arthur O'Connor or Lord Edward Fitzgerald, we should not have liked it ourselves. This consideration, however it explains, does not do away with the fact. "*Idem velle, idem nolle, ea denuum firma amicitia*,"—the maxim is as true in political, as in private life. As long as the necessities, real or supposed, of Austrian statesmanship involve the oppression of Venetia and Hungary, and a renewal of the attempts against the independence of the Italian Peninsula, Austria and Great Britain must remain asunder. In days to come, this unhappy state of affairs may be changed,—for your Southern German, unlike his Northern brother, is a good fellow. The pulses of human life beat strong in him. He is not that hybrid mixture of a military martinet and a small college Don which constitutes the Prussian ideal of a man. His mind is not muddled and emasculated with bad beer, and worse metaphysics. He dwells in Vienna, not in Laputa. In South Germany you find men and women who can dance, and sing, hunt and shoot—make love, and amuse themselves like human beings. Given "a man," as the basis of sound calculation, you may look for a result—but what can be expected from a formula in uniform? If the Italian affairs were settled; if a certain degree of liberty were granted to the various provinces of the Austrian empire; and if the ambition of Austrian statesmen were directed to the Danubian banks, in place of the Italian Peninsula, we might still hope for a renewal of the old cordiality. Many a day, however, must pass ere we can look for such a result as this, and until then we must be content to remain under the ban of the Empire.

With the northern Germans, however, we have nothing but a cold Protestantism in common. In the absence of political sympathies we have no personal attraction towards them—nor they towards us. It is indeed true that, in this country, we do not trouble our heads much about them, but whenever we do cast a glance at Berlin, we find these worthy Prussian friends and allies of ours hotly engaged in the abuse of England and things English. You will find there even amongst statesmen and writers, who should be a little more enlightened than the mass of their countrymen—a profound ignorance of political economy, and a firm belief that England is carrying out a deep design against the independence of Europe by means of her Manchester calicoes and Birmingham tea-trays. Much as they dread France they dislike England even more. The recent occurrences on the Rhine are straws to show which way the wind

blows. Now, why should we trouble ourselves further, save upon grounds connected with our own security about such people? What is it to us if Germany is mortified at the loss of her Italian provinces? All bugbears and mere shadow-dances apart, which one of all the continental sovereigns has been the truest ally to us? Have we received sympathy and assistance from Germany, from Russia, or from France? All nations must take it as a fact that their real consideration and weight in the political scale depends upon themselves, not upon a momentary alliance here, or a chance friendship there. We cannot escape the common fate. Let us then give up, once for all, the visionary and ridiculous idea of backing-up either the military ambition of France or the Holy Alliance of the Three Powers.

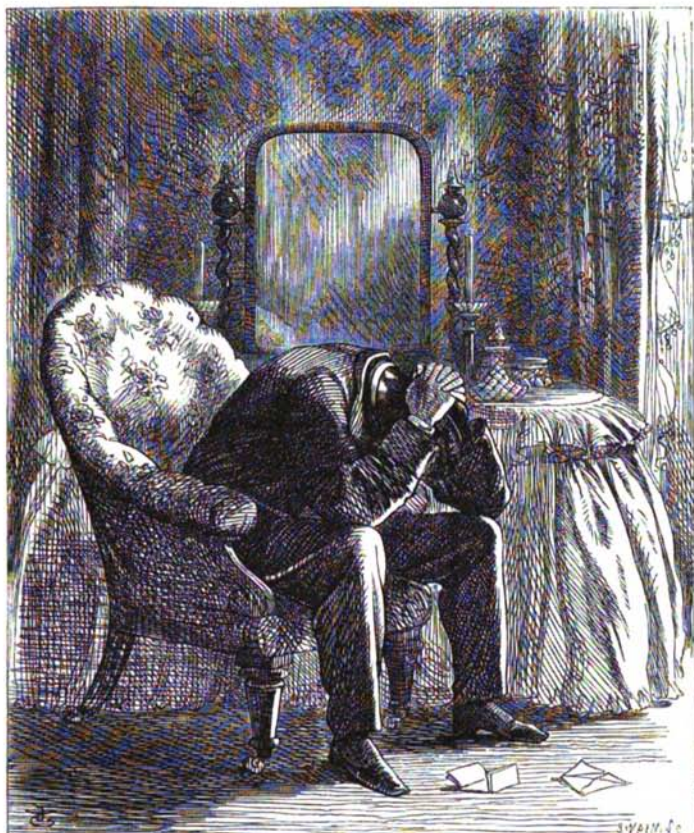
Nothing so dangerous, or so fatal to ourselves could happen as to be involved in hostilities on the continent of Europe. We may be very sure that 60,000,000 of Germans, and 35,000,000 of Frenchmen can scarcely carry out serious plans for cutting each other's throats for a period of years without so weakening themselves, as to leave that power which abstains from taking a share in the conflict, in a very formidable position when all is done. If we are to have war sooner or later, as the Old Duke used to say, by all means let it be later. In any case let us keep clear of political entanglements which would involve us in difficulties with the sovereign who stood by us in the Crimea for the sake of the Three Sovereigns, one of whom was our actual enemy, another our cold friend, the third,—how shall we describe the relation between Prussia and England during the struggle in the Baltic and the Black Sea?

Garibaldi, who has done such great things gave to the world last week a short letter, in which he seemed to shadow out the idea of a great European confederation with France at the head of it. It is needless to say that to such a system, as far as England is concerned, Englishmen would never subscribe. Most probably the great Italian leader looks at the policy of Europe, for the moment, under the influence of his strong detestation of the German name. Hatred of Germany lies at the bottom of the idea. As far as he, or indeed any Italian is concerned, it is not to be wondered at if such be the predominant thought.

The oppression exercised under the First Empire by the French is clean forgotten, because half a century or thereabouts has intervened since it was swept away. Read the historians, however, and the liberal writers of the period, and you will find that the name of France found as little favour with the Italians of that day as the name of Germany now. With such suggestions Englishmen have nothing to do. Taught by the experience of many years, we are but too painfully aware that from actual intervention in favour of any people little advantage is to be expected; but, on the other hand, an annual obligation to pay 28,000,000*l.* is the cost of our past interference in favour of crowned heads. Finally, if ever we could be brought to act once more in concert with any of the European sovereigns, we altogether decline to become members of the new—Holy Alliance.

THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.



CHAPTER I.

"FOUR," remarked St. Mary of the Strand, successor to the tall Maypole that once overlooked what is now the pleasantest, and handsomest, and most English street in London.

The vibration of the Saint's voice had by no means ceased from out of the ears of the passers-by, when, with an honourable promptitude, and a delicate anxiety not to put the country under the obligation of receiving more service than she had bargained for, groups of gentlemen of all ages and sizes came pouring out at the gate of Somerset House. One might have thought that they had been listening for the summons, and had prepared themselves to obey it on the instant. In the old days, that church did not collect the saints of Drury Lane so rapidly as it now called forth the clerks of the Civil Service.

But not among the early ones at the gate was Mr. Arthur Lygon.

He heard the last stroke of the bell, and the single note with which the little black clock on his mantelpiece ratified the announcement, before he closed the large volume in which he was making

by his side; and he proceeded to arrange all his documents with the precision of a man who intends to resume an interrupted duty, and who knows the value of order and of time. He was exact, but not the least fidgety—a man, happily married, seldom becomes a fidget at five-and-thirty.

Nor did Arthur Lygon at once take up his hat and depart. A handsome man, happily married, seldom loses, at the age of thirty-five, his bachelor habit of paying some attention to appearances; and Mr. Lygon went to the other end of his comfortable, double-sashed apartment—exclusively his own—brushed his wavy dark brown hair, washed his aristocratic hands, and gave himself that good-natured look-over which a man who has no objectionable vanity, but has the laudable desire to be as presentable as he conveniently can, usually performs before re-joining society. King Henry the Fifth, when courting, vowed that he had never looked in the glass for the love of anything he saw there; and the vows of kings—and emperors—are always truthful; but all of us have not the regal faculty of self-abnegation. Arthur Lygon, finishing his arrangements with a touch at his rather

content to see in the glass the reflection of a set of intellectual features, somewhat of the Grecian type, but manifesting much power of decision, despite the good-tempered expression which they habitually wore. He perceived also that the person thus reflected was rather slight, but well made, and a little above the average height, and that his dress was in accordance with the fashion of the day, with a little more lightness and colour about it than one usually sees in the costume of a man of business. Lygon was a good looking, well-dressed man, and if he had been previously unaware of the fact, he had been told it, with other things of a pleasant character, in one of a highly complimentary series of sketches called *Our Civilians*, which were appearing in a pictorial paper devoted to the immortalising British Worthies of various degrees of worthiness.

In the memoir annexed to the likeness of the civilian in question it was stated, with perfect accuracy, that Mr. Arthur Lygon had entered the Plaudit Office when young, had risen, by his own merits, to a responsible and lucrative situation, was much liked by his comrades, and much respected by his superiors, and was in every respect a valuable public servant. It was further stated, in classical language, that he had given hostages to society, a process that was explained to mean that he had married Laura, third daughter of Archibald Vernon of Liphwaite, in the county of Surrey, and had three children. Society, therefore, had only to purchase the respectable journal containing the sketches of *Our Civilians*, in order to avoid betraying any ignorance upon so important a matter as the social position of Mr. Arthur Lygon, of the Plaudit Office; and if it were in his destiny to distinguish himself in after-time, and to join the legislative assembly of his country, here were materials ready at hand for the *Parliamentary Handbooks*—one is glad to be able to supply some vindication of the biographical zeal of the present age.

Arthur Lygon, before leaving his room, tore away from the Almanac the one-dayface that stared in his own, and he thus treated the day as at an end. This operation left next day's date visible, and it was Thursday, June 17, 185—.

Of this date, however, there was no need to remind him, as a neat square packet on his table testified. The Thursday was the birthday of his little girl, Clara, and the packet contained a handsome picture-book, which he had bought for her some days back, and which had just come to him with the small lady's name elegantly imprinted thereon in golden letters. Lygon did not leave even trifles to the last minute, and moreover did not consider it a trifle to bring out an additional sparkle in his child's eye, or a second scream of pleasure from her merry rosy mouth.

He walked westward, and having nearly a couple of hours between the time and his dinner hour, he had ample leisure to make the walk to Brompton an agreeable lounge. And the man who cannot lounge in comfort and delectation along the Strand on a fine day is simply a fool. If that eternal New Zealander can spare time from his ridiculous efforts to keep his own and his father's land from the land-jobbers, and will come over

here before the arch is ruined and ready for him, he may be really well educated by a few walks up and down our great thoroughfare. "To have loved her was a liberal education," was exquisitely written of a lady of old. If a tolerably practical curriculum, with a dash of sentiment and poetry in it, were wanted, it might be difficult to prescribe better than in the words "Walk the Strand."

Lygon, of course, walked it as an *habitué* walks. He noted some new machine, approved it as useful or smiled at it as a bit of quackery. He glanced over the Parian sculptures and the painted plates, and very properly remembered that he owed Laura a present—which he would continue to owe her. He stopped for a moment before the maps, and refreshed his memory as to the distance from Calcutta to Canton—there was talk about China, just then, at the dinner-tables. He looked at the jewellery, and wondered how such a number of jewel shops could find customers enough, and also whether there would ever be any new patterns worth stopping to look at. He not only passed at the book-shops; but, half-adhering to the old faith that you may buy bargains there, and that the vendors do not know the value of books better than you do, he examined a good many of the labels with the usual result; namely, confirmation of the new faith, that if you want a good thing you must pay a good price for it. He regarded the windows set out with minerals, and felt half-tempted to torment his second boy, Frederick, with a toy that is warranted to teach geology in a week; but fatherly feeling prevailed, and he passed on. He scarcely looked at some huge play-bills, because they had not been changed for two months, and Laura had seen and duly abandoned at the *Maelstrom*, and the screams as the ship went down, in that awful drama. He noticed all the print-shops, and resisted all the temptations that worn plates and cheap frames could offer, as well as the less easily resisted temptation of some German engravings of the higher class—for the Strand baits for all fish. And except that he bought a little gold pencil-case, to be given to Clara by her mamma, on the morrow, and recollected Walter's request for a new knife, Mr. Lygon reached Trafalgar Square without much detriment to his worldly means.

"Only half-past five," he said, as he reached his own pleasant house in Gurdon Terrace.

Walter, a high-spirited, dark-eyed boy, of ten years old, heard his father's latch-key, and was in a moment tearing down the stairs with that cataclysmic rush peculiar to the species.

"Ah! papa," he cried, throwing his arms round Mr. Lygon's neck. "Got my knife?" he added, proceeding almost in the same breath from affection to business.

"Knife?" repeated his father, pretending to be unconscious of the boy's meaning. "Knife, my boy?"

"Yes, knife my boy," returned Walter, for when was a child deceived by a loving voice? "You've got it, you know you have."

"Well, whether I have got it or not, you might let me come into the room," said his father, entering a little apartment on the left of the hall. The room was conventionally described in the house as

"papa's," and as matter of course, therefore, crowded with everybody else's litter, and where papa could seldom find anything of his.

"I wish I might have one seat in my own room," said Mr. Lygon, affecting to grumble, and sweeping the pieces of a dissected puzzle of Joseph and his Brethren from the chair that seemed least choked up. "I told you, Master Walter, to see that the puzzle was put back into the box when done with."

"Well, it's Fred's fault, papa," replied Walter, of course.

"Oh, certainly," said Mr. Lygon, seating himself.

He was going to make Walter pick up the pieces, before entering into further discussion, but the boy's eager look at the waistcoat-pocket in which he supposed his new treasure to be, was almost affecting, and his father could not be hard-hearted.

"Now, about this knife," he began gravely; but the boy's arm was round Mr. Lygon's neck in a moment.

"Yes, about the knife—out with it, papa."

"Just you please to stay a moment, Master Walter. This makes the fifth knife since Christmas, and that won't do."

"No, pa, only the fourth."

"Fifth, I tell you. There was the nice buck-horn one that your uncle Charles gave you."

"Nice one! Pretty nice ones! Why, I broke it the very same afternoon."

"And whose fault was that, your uncle's?"

"Yes, it was. He ought to have given me a stronger one. Why, didn't you tell me I ought to make a boat, and didn't the blade fly away as I was cutting one?"

"I did not tell you to cut boats with a pen-knife. But I remember I then bought you a beauty, white handle and three blades, sir."

"Yes, that was a beauty. I hope you've bought me another like it."

"Indeed, no. But where did that go to?"

"Well, there was a hole in my pocket, and I suppose it went through that."

"Your mamma gave you another."

"Oh, a girl's thing! little bits of blades no bigger than that," showing a thumb-nail that might have been cleaner. "I gave it to Lizzie Park, the day we went on the water, and she gave me a gimblet, for good luck."

"And where did the young lady get a gimblet, pray?"

"Out of her papa's box of tools, I suppose. I've got it in my pocket now."

"Then please to take it out of your pocket, and put it in a proper place. Now, Master Walter, about number four? Did you not take my own desk knife, from this very inkstand?"

"Oh, ah!" returned Walter, convicted but not convinced. "I don't call that a knife."

"What do you call it—a fork?"

"No," said Walter, with one of those sprits of laughter that reward you for saying something utterly ridiculous to a child. "But you can't call that a knife—it don't shut."

It was now his father's turn to laugh, and to hand over the brown Wharnccliffe he had brought down. Walter was more than delighted—all the

advantages of the beautiful lost white knife, with the manly character of the brown handle—perfect. He gave his father a violent hug, and a kiss which, hastily directed anywhere, fell on the parent's ear, and then the boy dashed off, proclaiming that he must show his prize to mamma.

"Mamma is dressing for dinner," his father cried after him. "She don't want you."

"Oh, she always wants me," was the answering shout, as Walter tore up the stairs three at a time.

Mr. Lygon looked into the dining-room. The table was laid for three, as usual—for himself and Mrs. Lygon, and for Miss Clara, who was permitted to complete the party, though an early dinner with her school-boy brothers, Walter and Fred, made her attendance almost honorary. But papa liked to see his little lady at the dinner-table, and Mrs. Lygon had a curious and unfeminine habit of complying with all his whims.

His wife's portrait, a rather large oil-painting, hung over the mantelpiece, and his eye caught a card put between the painting and the frame.

"I wonder who did that," said Mr. Lygon, discontent. "I have said a dozen times that I will not have things stuck there." And he took out the offensive card, and looked at it.

"Mr. Ernest Adair," he read. "I don't know the name, do I? Ernest Adair—no—I've heard of Robin, but Laura knows, I suppose." And as the making even so slight an alteration as the removing a card from a picture will often cause you to look earnestly at the work itself, though it has hung before you for years, Arthur Lygon paused for a moment or two and gazed on the likeness of his wife.

A beautiful face, with a mass of dark hair in clustered curls,—a forehead lower than painters care to draw, except those painters who comprehend that the best type of womanhood is not found with the traditional high brow,—an expression of stillness, perhaps verging on sternness, and something that spoke of troubles confronted, perhaps of sufferings endured. And yet the face was loveable, and the violet eyes were tender. For the rest, a delicate throat, a white full shoulder, and rounded and graceful arms. The figure was seated, and in one of the faultless hands—almost too small—was a rosary of golden beads.

"She is handsomer now than she was then," said the husband, with a determined expression, as if of defiance to all who might doubt whether the mother of three children could excel in beauty a lovely-looking girl of nineteen.

"She is, though," he added, with an affirmation which, as there was a happy smile on his lips, and a world of affection in his heart, was not, let us hope, laid to his charge. "In the first place, she is happier, and—"

He left the room, and the next minute his little Clara bounded into his arms, if not with as much energy as her brother's, with quite as much delight, and as her luxuriant hair, dark as her mother's, shaded his face, she murmured her words of fondness.

"Dear, dear papa," she said, kissing him over and over again.

And no sooner was she dismissed, than there

was another scene of love, on the next landing, where Frederick was lying in wait for his father, and pounced upon him with boisterous affection. It is a monotonous story, but a happy one.

"Been to school in those splendid clothes, Fred?"

"Half-holiday, Wednesday, papa."

"Ah, so it is. And where have you been? To the Zoological Gardens?"

"No, we were going there with mamma, but a gentleman came, and so mamma was obliged to send us out for a walk by ourselves, me and Clara."

"Who was that, Fred?"

"I don't know him. I saw him just for a minute. He was an ugly-looking fellow."

"Hush, sir, you mustn't call names, and, above all, never use them to people who come to see us, because that is worse than rude, it's unkind. I suppose you thought him ugly because he kept you from going to the beasts."

"Well, you take us on Sunday?" said Fred, declining the discussion.

"We'll hear what mamma says," replied Mr. Lygon, going to his dressing-room.

When he came out again, he gave a rap at the bed-room door as he passed, and crying, "Six, mother," descended to the drawing-room, where he found Walter, who was breathing on his new blades, watching the breath-damp evaporate, and tenderly wiping the steel with the corner of a table-cover. He had conscience enough, however, to feel that this last proceeding was exceptionable, and with one of those irresistibly sly looks which disarm remonstrance, he pocketed the knife, and began to hang on to his father's well-knit arm, and raise himself from the ground by his hands.

"There, my boy, a little of that will do on a hot day," said Mr. Lygon, laughingly swinging him away. "What did mamma say to the present?"

"She didn't call me to come in, so I couldn't show it her."

"And how is Entropius?"

"Oh, he's very well, thank you," said Walter; "and so's Numa Pompilius who was very bilious and Aeneas Martius who wore moustachios, and all the rest of 'em. Shall I tell mamma to come down?" he added, as if not particularly eager to undergo a classical examination.

"If you like."

In a quarter of a minute he was knocking very loudly at the bed-room door. Apparently the summons was without effect, for it was repeated with additional pertinacity.

"Mamma won't answer me," said Walter, coming back to the room rather discomfited.

"Have you been doing anything rude, or wrong?" said Mr. Lygon.

"No, indeed, papa," said Walter, whose face was truthfulness itself. "We had quite a game, me and ma, when I came in from school, racing round the dining-room table, and kissing one another."

"Can she be unwell?" said Mr. Lygon, running up-stairs.

No answer was given to his knock, or voice, and he tried the door. It was not fastened, and he partly opened it and spoke again. No answer, and he entered. No wife was there.

"Why, she must have gone down-stairs, Walter, before I came from my room," said the father, laughing at the boy, who had followed him up-stairs.

Walter did not laugh in return. He looked grave for a moment, and then dashed down-stairs with even greater celerity, if possible, than was his wont. It did not take that earnest searcher many seconds to fly into every room in the lower part of the house, and he returned to his father, who was adjusting some prints on the bed-room walls.

"Mamma's not down-stairs."

Is there any sort of instinct which warns a loving creature of a sorrow at hand—a sorrow in which the dearly loved one is implicated?

"Look up-stairs," said his father, promptly, and noticing a sudden pallor on the child's face.

Walter sprang away on the instant; but before he was on the topmost stair his father held in his hand the key of the mystery. Lygon's eye had fallen on an ivory box on a small table. The box was open, and a letter addressed to himself was placed upright in it, placed as with intention that his notice should be attracted by the paper.

His wife had written the direction, but the note he took from the envelope was not in the graceful though irregular hand he loved so well. It was a man's writing.

But he opened the note calmly enough—why should he not have done so?—we do not live in a world of melodrama, and a married lady living at Brompton may be suddenly called away from her home without any necessity for her husband's being alarmed. Her sister has been taken ill, and the doctor has sent a hasty line of summons, or Mr. Vernon—

But it is not her father's small writing—it is a stranger's hand.

"*Laura Vernon has no choice, and must obey the call which removes her. All pursuit or inquiry will be in vain. But silence may be rewarded.*"

That was all. And the last five words were written in a hurried hand, and as if unwillingly, and were blotted, as if they had been added at the last moment.

"Laura Vernon."

Arthur Lygon's heart had long since ceased to throb at the sight or sound of that name. From the day when an agitated bride had exchanged it for another, and he had clasped her to that heart in the earnestness of as true a love as a woman may desire, the girl-name's power of magic had been surrendered to another word of charming. To read the old word, and in a stranger's writing, and as the opening of that strange message, was a thing to do in the wild yet calm madness of a dream, but there—there—in the bedroom of the house, with all the common-place comfort of an orderly household around him, the very summons to dinner about to be given, the children—

"She is not up-stairs, papa."

"Mamma has gone out," said Mr. Lygon, as calmly as he had ever spoken. "Go down-stairs,

Walter, and stay with Clara and Frederick until I come down."

He closed and locked the door.

In life, it were base to take advantage of one who is suddenly roused from sleep. Let the same generosity be observed in telling his story; and while a kind, good, happy man awakens from his happiness, it may be to remain neither good nor kind, let us turn away, in decent humanity, and leave him, unwatched, to shudder into comprehension of what has come to him—come to him on the day which, but three hours ago, he treated as ended. Let us leave him to his waking.

CHAPTER II.

To the simple question, "How far is Liphthwaite from the railway-station?" the reply, "That depends upon circumstances," would seem to savour of the simplicity for which a less gentle name might be found by practical or impatient inquirers. Consigning these to the mystifications of the respected Quaker, whose monthly Quadrilateral is so efficient a defence of our towns and cities against invasion by the traveller, we will presently vindicate a reply which appears to be no answer.

The people of Liphthwaite were always rather proud of their clean, cheerful little town, but their pride received an accession which became almost dangerous, when their new and beautiful neighbour, Lady Charrington, on her return from her wedding tour in Scotland, declared to Sir Frederick, as he was showing her about the little borough of which she was to become the friend, patroness, and star, that Liphthwaite reminded her of Edinburgh. Sir Frederick was still in that honeymoonlight which silvers everything for a happy and admiring young husband, yet his astonishment at this speech made him pull the ponies in with such a jerk that they nearly backed the basket-chair into the shop of the chief bookseller, round which two or three gentlemen were lounging—they lounged a good deal at Liphthwaite.

One of the group, a tall, elderly, black-frock-coated gentleman, with a shrewd but still a kindly expression in his well-marked face, and with some humour in his smile, stepped forward to offer assistance, but the well-trained ponies were thoroughly in hand, and stood almost motionless as Sir Frederick greeted his friend.

"How do you do, Mr. Berry?" he said. "Home again, you see."

"We are all very glad to welcome you back, Sir Frederick, after so long an absence."

"But here is my excuse for my absence," replied the proud and happy husband. "Mr. Berry, Helen—a very old friend."

Mr. Berry thought, as he looked at her sunshiny face, that her husband had a right to be proud; and a few minutes afterwards, when her pleasant voice had been heard, the elder gentleman made up his mind that the younger was going to be happy. There is an old proverb in those parts, advising a man to choose a wife by the ear and not the eye. Sir Frederick had done better, and chosen by both.

"I must tell Mr. Berry, my love," said Sir Frederick, "how it was we nearly ran over him."

"Yes, and tell me too," said the young wife, laughing. "What in the world were you about?"

"Lady Charrington has found out that our poor little Liphthwaite is like Edinburgh. Ought we not to be vain? Do you know Edinburgh, Berry?"

"Yes, tolerably well. It is the most picturesque city in the world, and I have seen most of the fine cities, I believe."

"I am to be taken to see them all," said Lady Charrington; "that is an engagement. But in the meantime I declare that my notion is not so ridiculous as to make it right to pull off the poor ponies' heads. Mr. Berry shall decide."

"Well, let him. Only as he was the Town Clerk of Liphthwaite before he gave up law and settled in the pretty place I'll show you presently, he will be prejudiced in favour of his borough."

"You see there is something in what I say," she answered, merrily, "or you would not be begging the judge to be impartial. But see. Here we are in a handsome street of new houses, and nice shops, and over there, running parallel with this, is that dear, queer, quaint, dirty old street—what did you call it, Fred?"

"Moggrums."

"It is a hideous name," Mr. Berry said, "and we have been half a dozen times going to change it for something more euphonious—only it has been found difficult to agree upon the new title. So we comfort ourselves by explaining to strangers that Moggrums is a corruption from the Latin, and that the Romans, when they settled here, called the place *Morogesium*—I do not believe that there ever was such a name, or that the Romans were here at all, and Lady Charrington must help us to a new name which we shall all like, and we will get rid of the fable."

"No, no," said Lady Charrington, "keep everything old. I love everything that is old. And now please to look again. That beautiful hill, with the dear heather on it—it is not very high, after what we have been seeing, but it stands on the left, in just the situation as regards the town as Arthur's Seat does to Edinburgh, and then on the other hill on our right are those ruins—they may stand for the Castle."

"They are the ruins of a castle, Lady Charrington, and there is a perfectly untrustworthy story of King John's having held a court there, and I am sorry to say that an irreverent inhabitant of Liphthwaite deposited in our museum some teeth found on the hill, with a label suggesting that they were some of the Jews' teeth which that Sovereign, you know, used to draw when he wanted money."

"And you have a museum, too? I must come and see it."

"And there's a museum in Edinburgh," laughed Sir Frederick, "so there's another likeness for you. Well, we'll get on home. Mr. Berry, I need not tell you how glad we shall be to see you at the Abbey—I don't mean morning calls, and all that, but come whenever you feel inclined. The pictures are there, the books are there, the coins are there, and we are there; and I don't think my father's dear old friend and mine wants more said to him."

"A great deal more," said Lady Charrington,

instantly speaking kindly on seeing that her husband felt kindly, "and he must come to the Abbey for me to say it to him."

And so they parted; but the Edinburgh notion, which of course Mr. Berry mentioned to his friends, was stereotyped in the Liphthwaite mind from that hour, and was duly set forth to all visitors—except Scottish ones. If it help the reader to comprehend somewhat of the features of our borough, the happy-hearted bride did not speak in vain. But we will fill up the outline a little.

Liphthwaite is in the leafy county of Surrey, and among all the pleasant little towns in pleasant England there is probably not one whose founders chose a better site. It stands in a valley bounded on the eastern side by a high ridge of well-defined hills of considerable height. Portions and strips of these are cultivated, and other sections of the hill-sides wear a close clothing of fir, which crown the very top, while the larger parts, and especially the bolder and the terminating heights, are wild common, studded with green knolls, and garnished with the purple heather. To penetrate from the open breezy hill-top into the winding glades of the little forests, and to refresh the eyes in the quiet shade, and to listen to the sheep-bell and the mill-splash, and then to emerge into the full light, and look out upon the broad prospect of a highly-cultured country, spotted here and there with villages, to which the eye is guided by the little spire or tower, is no great achievement in the way of sight-seeing; but that unheroic ramble, if undertaken in the heroic spirit of patience and thankfulness, will not be unrewarded.

To return into Liphthwaite, in which it is desirable that a reader should feel himself at home, be it added that, although it possesses, as Lady Charrington has said, but two principal streets, lying nearly parallel, the one, old and irregular, and inhabited chiefly by the humbler class of our population (we were 4871 at the census of 1851), and the other built in more modern fashion, and containing some good shops, and many well-looking private houses, including our best and dearest hotel, the Barbel, those streets are connected, chiefly towards the two extremities, by several small and tortuous lanes, and these straggle out to various lengths from the town, some of them extending their broken lines of squalid white cottages nearly half a mile into the green fields, while others are brought up short, either by a stern red-brick house, which establishes itself as a sort of sentinel to prohibit further advance, or, more ignobly, by the darkening carcasses of unfinished buildings, whose originators have had to be reminded by certain Commissioners of a text about building without counting the cost. The outskirts of Liphthwaite, indeed, on the castle end, are out the portion of the town on which our pride, before mentioned, chiefly perches itself. What we do pique ourselves upon is, first, our noble old church, to which the Reformers did very little harm, and the churchwardens have done very little more, and where there is a wooden font of unequalled ugliness, which we would not change for alabaster sculptured by Baron Marochetti. Secondly, we are proud of our Town Hall, which is hideous

in point of architecture, and odious in point of accommodation, but in which King Charles II. was entertained to dinner, and made a joke which we loyally suppose that the mayor of the day was too frightened to recollect accurately, as it is so exceedingly stupid that we do not much care to repeat it. Thirdly, we are proud of a statue of Queen Anne, in white marble, to which some Hindoos, who were in the town in 1821, actually prostrated themselves, being suddenly struck by the extraordinary likeness of the work to one of their own frightful idols. And, lastly, we are proud of our prosperous literary institute, our very solvent gas works, our handsome workhouse, our increasing museum (to which a nobleman who cares nothing for zoology has generously given all his late father's collection of stuffed animals), our respectable Independent, Methodist, Baptist, and Unitarian chapels, and of our latest improvement of all, a drinking fountain, erected by our neighbour, Mr. Andover, who has done so many kind things for Liphthwaite (where there are a good many electors) that we form our own notions of his views for his eldest son, said to be a good speaker at the Union.

Now, to justify the answer about the distance from the railway station, and at the same time to let the reader see a little into the character of the excellent Mr. Berry (of whom more will be heard in the course of the story), suppose we let him state the case in a way to which he was rather partial.

"When my nephew, Horace Armstrong, who is in the War Office, was visiting me here, two years ago," said the old gentleman, "I introduced him to most of my friends, and as he was a handsome, talkative, good-natured young fellow, who dressed very well, and made himself acceptable to the ladies, he enjoyed himself much, and left me alone a great deal, for which I was obliged to him. There were two families, in particular, by whom Mr. Horace was very much welcomed. These were next-door neighbours. Mr. Oliphant who succeeded to my business, has a series of daughters, all more or less pretty, and willing to be appreciated by a young gentleman; and Mrs. Penson, widow of the East India captain, has another series with the same qualifications. These girls are all fast friends till further notice, and Horace Armstrong, introduced among them, became an extraordinary favourite. In fact the silly things made a perfect pet and idol of him, and as he had not the least objection to be so treated by a cluster of pretty merry girls, his time passed very happily. He got his holiday extended, and when his country could do without him no longer, he contrived to persuade me to buy him a month's railway ticket, and let him stay at Liphthwaite, and run up to town every morning. It was the summer, to be sure, and it is a good thing for girls to get up early and take walks, and they have a right to walk which way they like. So there could be no objection to the Misses Oliphant and the Misses Penson discovering that their pleasantest walk was one which always took my elegant nephew to an 8-45 train. They used to walk him round Spence's Gardens, down Love Lane into the fields, across the mill-stream, and

under the hill, and so through the Ghost Copse to the road that leads to the station. At that time he always assured me that the walk was nothing, that it could be done in a quarter of an hour, and easily in twenty minutes. Now I know every stone on the road, and the walk is one of two miles and a quarter.

"Well, sir, one year ago, my beloved nephew, Horace, came down again. The pretty Oliphants and the pretty Pensons were just ready to begin to pet him as ever; but the pet himself was in no mood for such attentions. He scarcely went near them, and when he had to go to London, he took the shortest cut that I could show him. Even this walk, which I can do in five-and-twenty minutes, he used to declare to be most weary and tedious; and he used to abuse the turns in the road for being so far off, and curse the poor monotonous palings for being so many—a fellow never seemed to have got past them—and vent the other wise and manly sentiments which a discontented young fellow lavishes upon inanimate objects when he is out of humour. The fact was, that he had become desperately smitten with the sister of a fellow War-Office-man, and being moreover in debt, he suddenly found his debts intolerable, as preventing his settlement in life. You may easily guess what he wanted out of uncle, but uncle means to make Mr. Horace wait a bit. Meantime, he used to declare that the walk to the station was one of an hour and three-quarters, and the ugliest walk in all England. Now that is quite untrue, as you can see Hadbury Hill all the way; and for the winter, you are under the interlacing trees, to say nothing of our river, the Burde, which when at all swollen by rains is a handsome stream, over which you cross in your way to the rail."

With some of these localities you will become well acquainted before we conclude our narrative, and there is one other place in Liphthwaite to which it may be well to conduct you, that you may know it again when the time to revisit it arrives. This is the house of Mr. Berry himself. It stands upon some land once belonging to a client of his (such foundations to lawyers' houses are not infrequent), land which lies on a gentle slope a little way out of Liphthwaite, at the hill end of the town. From the lawn in front of the house we look upon Hadbury Hill, and see all the fine effects which the sun, either by his presence or his absence, loves to call up on mountain scenery, and even on such modest likeness to mountain scenery as our bold hills present. The town is entirely shut out from our view by a belt of trees on the right, and they form part of a semi-circle which protects the side and rear of the house, and extends downwards until stopped, somewhat abruptly, by a little clear quick stream of water (Mr. Berry's boundary), which ultimately finds its way into the Burde. To the left the view is open, the most prominent object being the dark thick woods by which the Abbey, Sir Frederick Charrington's seat, is surrounded, and on the horizon are the Alster Hills, between which, in clear weather, the host can make out the sea, and his visitors say they can. The house itself, which is called Cromwell Lodge (in memory of a relative

what the old gentleman himself describes as a "mild" specimen of modern Gothic.

"Fools," says Mr. Berry, "according to the proverb, build houses, and wise men live in them; but perhaps it means that a man grows wise after he has had to live for any time in a house he has been fool enough to build. If he does not—with the aid of his architect, of his servants, and his wife—he is unteachable indeed. I shall not say what this little place cost me, or anything about the trouble I had in persuading my friend, Mr. Gurgyle, that I had better not add a new wing, and throw out a music-room, or anything about the servants I have discharged for wrenching my registers, burning my bath-pipe, and nailing up my ventilators. Nor will I say anything about the meek but persevering murmurs of Mrs. Berry, who has never been so happy in her neat, new rooms, with their gliding and all the rest of it, as she was in the old house in Liphthwaite, where she had a deep dark cupboard at every turn, and—nay, let me do her woman's heart better justice—where those whom it did not please God to spare us, used to race and riot till the fatal month—the cholera month—which opened upon us as the parents of three loving children, and went out with the day on which we laid the last baby in Liphthwaite churchyard. I have never complained to poor Marion that she is not happy in the pleasant home I have given her.

"My friend Gurgyle," resumed the old gentleman, after a pause, "was not profound in his art, but then I did not know enough of architecture to warrant my interference, and I did know enough of the world to be sure that if I interfered I should make matters worse, especially as regarded the expenditure. So he had his own way, and though the windows are not exactly the right thing, I can see out of them capitolly; and though the porch is said to be very objectionable, I can sit there with much comfort in the evening; and as for the chimneys, if they had been more like what Mr. Pugin, or Mr. Slater would have approved, I dare say they would have smoked just as badly as they did until we made their ugliness uglier by our tin tubes and cowl. The house is well enough, and nobody finds fault with my comfortable dining-room on the left, or I may say, with anything that is set upon my bright old table, which I bought when I married. Nor does anybody, except poor Mrs. Berry, dislike my pretty drawing-room on the right, with its view of the Hill. There is my library beyond the dining-room, and I have some good books there, and a few rare ones—also, some coins, especially the Cæsar in gold, and a fair English series—but nothing very remarkable. There is a fine collection at the Abbey, but Sir Frederick knows only that it is fine—his father and I used to wrangle about a coin as stubbornly as the deceased beathens for whom it was struck could have done, when making some of their Pagan bargains. Sir Charles Charrington was a singular old man, and very clever, though he did not know so much of coins as he imagined."

And thus much for our pleasant town of Liphthwaite.

THE BAKER.

HIS HEALTH.

WILLIAM COBBETT was gone before we heard the rising of the storm which has since raged so furiously against the adulteration of our food and drink; yet no one has written more strongly than Cobbett against baker's bread. I own that my heart warms to his descriptions of the cottager's wife at her bread-board and oven. He would have had everybody, even the day-labourer's wife, brew at home also; and there is something fascinating in his eloquence on behalf of meals of home-made bread, fat bacon, and beer, in contrast with the potatoes he so abhorred, and wishy-washy tea. He declared that the consumption of fuel in boiling potatoes and making tea was more than a set-off against the bacon and beer. Though he was unjust to the potato, from being unaware of its eminently nutritious quality when properly used, he was no doubt right about the value of a more varied diet, and in his estimate of really good bread, beer, and bacon. Where he was wrong in his advice was in neglecting the economy of time and labour. He would have set fifty cottagers' wives hewing, with their fifty sets of utensils, and at a cost of fifty days' labour, when they might get their beer more cheaply as to money, and without any expenditure of time, at the brewery. If there is any question as to the quality, I should say that for one housewife who makes better beer than the brewery there are a score who make worse. The uncertainty is a great drawback on both beer and bread that are made at home. On the whole, the economy of division of employments is sure to prevail; so that there was little use in opposing it, even in Cobbett's day; but yet we may be permitted to think it a pleasant sight, in town or country, when we enter a humble kitchen just as the steaming loaves are cooling on the clean dresser.

It is also pleasant to country housekeepers to see the relish with which London guests take to the home-made loaf,—cutting bit after bit, after they have done, and excusing themselves by the goodness of the bread. Even in the houses where this pleasant sight is seen, however, there is sometimes a reverse. The next cook that comes may not succeed well with her bread, either from want of practice or want of skill. Then there is the difficulty about yeast,—still recurring, after all the advice that has been shed abroad upon it. Then there is the varying quality of the flour, and of the weather. There are few houses in which a hatch of bad bread is never seen. Considering this, and the defective education of girls in household matters, and the new modes of female industry among the working-classes, it is not surprising that the professional bakers do by far the greater part of the bread-making in all societies; and if they are more or less superseded, it will not be by a return to the old article of home-made bread, but by the increasing use of machinery. Meantime, the craft is an important one for numbers in other ways. There are twelve thousand bakers in London alone.

I can just remember the case of the bakers in the miserable days of bad bread after the harvests

of the early years of the century. I will not nauseate my readers by telling them what some of the bread in those days was like, when the sound old wheat was all consumed, and the soft, sticky flour from the new crop was the only thing that could be had. The large towns were particularly afflicted, and none more so than Birmingham. Some monied men believed that, by forming themselves into a company, they could provide better bread, because they could command better wheat, and grind it themselves. They succeeded in supplying good bread at the same cost as the bad, and of course they were popular with the buyers; but the millers and bakers were furious. They organised a strong persecution against the company, and at last, in 1809, induced the authorities to prosecute the directors in the name of the crown.

The public were aware that it was a curious sign of the times, and they watched the result very anxiously. The charge was that the company—an illegal institution—was injuring the interests of the millers and bakers. The verdict of the jury was undeniably true, and highly offensive to both parties. They declared that the object of the company was good—that the town was much benefited by its operations—that it commanded resources which were out of the reach of the trade generally, and that the millers and bakers had suffered by the competition. The millers and bakers had the best of it for some years after this; but there are now some half-dozen great mills at Birmingham, in public and private hands, sending out flour and bread in a way too potential to be interfered with. We are not likely to hear of Queen Victoria prosecuting any bread-making association, on the ground of its injuring the bakers. It seems strange now that such a thing could have been done in the name of her grandfather.

We may well doubt whether there are fewer bakers employed in consequence of the introduction of larger capital and new machinery into the trade. There is not only the increased number of bread-eaters to be considered, but the diminution in the quantity of home-made bread. The new census will soon tell us how many millers and bakers there are in the United Kingdom; and meantime we are informed, as I have said, that there are twelve thousand bakers in London alone. The class is thus a large one, and their welfare is a matter of deep social concern.

The ill-health of the class is a well-established fact. The miller's cough is a too familiar sound in the neighbourhood of any old-fashioned mill, and in the family of almost every baker. If any of us remember what it was in childhood to play in or about a windmill, to sit on the steps, to watch the tremendous sails in a wind, and keep timidly away from them when not a breath was stirring,—to hear the whizz of the grain in the hopper, and sneeze in the mealy atmosphere, and play among the sacks, and laugh at the miller's powdery appearance, we must remember the miller's cough. He may well cough, for he is breathing dust all the time he is at work. The dust of flour is not so bad as that of needles and razor-blades, nor of the stone-cutter's work;

but it forms a paste in the lungs and air-passages, which brings on deadly disease at last. The miller early begins to wheeze; and too commonly he spits blood, after a few years, and dies consumptive. His skin is clogged in the same way; and unless he is extremely careful to relieve it by frequent washing, he is subject to the inflammatory complaints which are caused by a loaded skin. Nobody knows more of the symptoms of asthma and consumption than the widows of the millers of twenty or thirty years ago. One of the greatest facts in the history of steam-flour mills is that they have put a stop to this sickness and mortality. Such a draught is made, and it is so directed, as to carry up the meal dust, in covered ways, and to throw it out into the upper air.

This particular danger is shared by the bakers; and it is only one of many; so that, as a body, they must be very unhealthy. Are they not visibly so? If we think over the bakers we have known, or observe them in their shops, or when distributing the bread, we shall find that they are a pale-faced, flabby, anxious-looking race. They are a nervous set of men, too, owing to the irregularity and deficiency of their sleep, as well as to their uneasy condition of body. From the accounts given by themselves and their friends of their liabilities, it might seem wonderful that any bakers are to be hired, but that we know there is no occupation, however unwholesome or disgusting, that is not pursued, almost as eagerly as the most agreeable. In some crafts the pay is in proportion to the risk or the noisomeness. It is not so with the bakers; and this is clear evidence that there is no lack of hands, however serious are the disadvantages of the employment.

A dozen years ago these disadvantages engaged so much attention that efforts were made (which have since been renewed) to obtain legislative protection for the health of bakers. We should have had cause for shame if the attempt had succeeded; but we need not be sorry that it was made, because it has stimulated the master-bakers to do their best for the welfare of their journeymen; it has taught the men that they must not look to the legislature for a kind of protection which they ought not to need, and which could never be secured by Act of Parliament; and it has afforded assurance to all thoughtful persons that the time is at hand when improvements in art will cure many mischiefs not otherwise curable. As the millers are now relieved of the deadly evil of meal dust, the bakers will be relieved of the causes of their bad health and early death. As there are plenty of healthy bakers in bread mills at this moment, we may be sure that there will not long be in private establishments 31 per cent. of journeymen bakers spitting blood, or 80 per cent. ailing in the chest in one way or another.

What, then, is the baker's state of health? What is his chance of life? What ought he to do in his particular circumstances?

The tables of Friendly Societies tell us that the bakers stand fifth on their lists. There are four trades that are more sickly, and nineteen that are less so. During the period of relief in sickness, in other words, from 20 to 70 years of age, the bakers claim for 178 weeks of sickness;

that is, nearly three years and a half of such illness as renders them unable to work. The very most burdensome class is that of the potters, who are ill for 333 weeks of the same period; and the best are the clerks and schoolmasters, who claim for 48 weeks, or less than a year. But these figures do not show the full strength of the case. The clerks and schoolmasters are, in large proportion, living at nearly or quite the end of the term; whereas the potters were, for the most part, dead in a few years from the outset, and the bakers disappear, on an average, before the middle of the term. Those who live for 10 years of the time have fewer weeks of chargeable sickness; and those who live 30 have more; and the computation made is the average; but if the term were not from 20 to 70, but from 20 to 50, the bad case of the potters and bakers would be seen to be very much worse than it now appears.

The bakers do not suffer from fever so much as several other trades. Fever invariably proceeds from bad air; and bad air cannot therefore be the most prominent grievance of the bakers, though we hear much of the closeness and bad smells of the places in which they work. There was naturally a good deal of exaggeration and partiality in the reports made on behalf of the journeymen at first; and it is probable that the employers have been roused to do their best for their men. At all events, here is the fact that fever does not prevail among them; and we have the testimony of medical officers of health who have examined the London bakehouses, to the good ventilation of most of them, and the really admirable management of many in this respect, and to the readiness and anxiety of the master-bakers to consider the health of their men. If the men were equally wise, there would be such a contrast between healthy and unhealthy bakehouses, that no legislation would be demanded by the most superficial or ignorant friend of the bakers.

Their particular liability is to diseases of the chest. The men grow hoarse; they lose voice; they become short of breath; they spit blood, and die consumptive. They suffer extremes of temperature, and have ailments from that cause. They carry heavy weights when exhausted with labour; and they work at night, and have cruelly long hours; and hence the nervous diseases which attend protracted wakefulness. It was a striking fact to foreigners, as well as to many people at home, that while the London builders were striking for ten hours' wages for nine hours' work, the bakers were agitating for twelve hours' work—which was a reduction very startling to the masters. Under the circumstances, nobody can be surprised that the chance of life is so low as it is. The average life of a journeyman baker ends at 42: some say at 40. They do not talk, as the steel-grinders do, of a short life and a merry one. It may be that they are apt to seek, like the needle-pointers and razor-grinders, a pernicious solace under the depression of ill-health; but they are a less reckless and audacious order of craftsmen; and one cannot but wonder why they choose that trade, if they are really convinced that it is the lot of the baker to die at 42.

Next—what can be done under the circumstances?

We may answer this question by looking at what *has* been done.

A dozen years ago, the main article of our food was made in the most disgusting places in London and other large towns, and in the most disgusting manner that could be conceived of in a civilised country. People keep away from shambles, lest what they would see there should come back upon their imaginations at dinner time: but it would have been worse to visit a bakehouse, because, while the state of things is no less disagreeable, it has always been unnecessary, and therefore more revolting than anything that occurs in the shambles. When I was a little child, the nursemaid made a call on some relations, on our return from a walk. It was not for the first time; and I always betook myself to a sawpit behind the house to watch the men at work, while the maid finished her gossip. On this occasion a gate was open, and I strayed into the next yard, which was a butcher's; and there I saw the early part of the cutting up of a beast, only just killed, and still reeking. The sight made a deep impression; and I believe my mother was surprised to find me in possession of some anatomical facts not usually known to little children. I dared not tell what I had seen; for I was pulled roughly away from the gate, and desired never to speak of "the dead cow!" but even that terrible picture is less repulsive than a visit to a certain order of bakehouses would have been a dozen years ago. I will not describe nastiness which has disappeared. Let it suffice that the nuisances which belong to the basement of houses were to be found in the bakehouses, because the bakehouse was in the basement. There were foul smells and rats, as well as excessive heat and crickets. There was so little light that the men lived in glaring gaslight. There was so little air that they were heavy, sick, and stupid, and had to go up into the air before they could eat. If we consider what such places must have been like when crowded with men toiling at such work as kneading dough, we need look no further.

Except on the premises of the lower orders—the "cheap and nasty" order of bakers—matters are arranged very differently now. The officers of health tell us that the nuisances are turned away from the bakehouses; that every corner is clean, the walls whitened, the utensils in a proper state; and the food and sleeping places of the men such as ought to content them. We know something of the humility required of rich men's servants in London, as to their bedrooms—how they are put among the black beetles in underground closets, in the height of the season, or all the year round; for, where there are kitchen fires, it is always the season for black beetles. In comparison with many a powdered footman's bed-closet, the sleeping places of the journeyman bakers are desirable chambers. This is better than the feverish napping on the board, or in the troughs, which used to be the practice. Moreover, the employers are, generally speaking, anxious to learn how they can improve the condition of their men, and willing to act on the suggestions of competent advisers.

Still, as the health of bakers continues bad, in comparison with most other people's, there must be much that is wrong. There certainly is.

It is an enormous evil that most bakehouses are under ground. The reason of this is, we are told, that the requisite space cannot be had above ground, except at a cost which the sale of bread will not repay. If this is true, we need not the ghosts of all the bakers who have died of bad air and heat to tell us that bread-making by machinery will drive out the old method. The Americans have told us the secret of how cheap bread may become when made by machinery on an extensive scale; and the steam-bakers can afford to have premises above ground if the old bakers cannot. Some bake-houses we have in yards, behind the dwellings; and there the lot of the journeymen is comparatively easy.

If there can be a worse evil than bad air, joined with extreme heat and perpetual gaslight, it is excessive work; and the long hours of the bakers are probably the worst known in the whole circuit of trades.

London must be supplied with hot rolls and new bread by hundreds of cart-loads early every morning, and every noon, and every evening. The journeyman baker, who had gone home wearied and exhausted, at five in the afternoon, must be called from his bed when other people are going to theirs, before he has got half his sleep out. He must be at his work by eleven o'clock; and there he is, under the gas, and amidst the floating flour which makes the air thick. There he is to be till five the next evening—sometimes till six or seven—with only snatches of sleep and eating, from an hour and a half to three hours, in all that time. The work is all hard—the mixing, the kneading, the baking, and the carrying out—which some of the men have to do.

It may be thought that the air of the streets must be refreshing after the night among the ovens below ground; and so, no doubt, it often is: but there are the chances of wind and weather, dangerous to an over-heated man who has been at work all night: and there is the weight he has to carry, sometimes amounting to 1 cwt. Then, back to the troughs and ovens, to make another batch for the evening demand; and another carrying round before he can go home to his tea and bed, for a mere four hours' rest.

If this is overwork on Mondays and Tuesdays, what is it between Thursdays and Sundays! The complaint of the men is that, in a great number of cases, the interval is not allowed on Friday evenings, and sometimes not on Saturdays: that is, they work from eleven on Thursday nights to the Saturday night, or even Sunday morning. It is incomprehensible how they stand this. Nothing can justify such a demand being made on them, or their agreeing, on any terms, to such a demand. To save his country from an invasion, or to rescue fellow-heings from perishing under an avalanche, or in a coalpit, a man may meritoriously work at that rate when occasion arises; but not to provide hot and new bread to London tables, from week to week, for 17s. a-week. Not that there is any war in requesting London or any other town to go without fresh bread. No good comes of efforts

to turn aside the regular stream of business. The remedy is of another kind. Machinery, and methods by which bread is made more rapidly, will put an end to overwork as destructive as the toil on a Louisiana sugar-plantation, where the overseer tells you it answers better to "use up" so many "hands" per season than to reduce the production.

These are the two main evils which too often subsist where all the rest have been got rid of. Not always; for there are master-bakers who have managed to reduce the hours of work without losing their custom. It is for the trade at large to consider whether they can do this, or whether they will retire from the contest with machinery. The most unlikely thing of all is that they can go on in their present way of conducting their business.

So much for the masters. Now, what can the men do?

It is for them to say whether they do the best they can for their health. When their turn comes for an hour or two's sleep, do they go at once to their proper bed, and get into it undressed and washed? or do they fling themselves down on the nearest place that will hold them, among the fumes of yeast, and the heat or the draughts which are common in bakehouses? Do they give themselves the best chance for an appetite by taking nothing between meals, according to the practice of educated and well-mannered people; or do they drink between meals, to support their strength, as they say?

When work is over, do they go straight home, to a wholesome tea and bed? or do they turn into the public-house, and game and quarrel, and drink till the night hour comes round? If their order has not the best character for sobriety, and frugality, and good-temper, there is great excuse for them, from the irritated condition of brain which their mode of life establishes: but no degree of allowance can lessen the misfortune. There are such people as elderly bakers, and even healthy bakers; and this shows that the men, to a certain extent, hold their lot in their own hands. The masters are perfectly justified in pointing out a man, here and there, who has sense and prudence in the management of himself, and a good wife to make his home the pleasantest and most restful place he can go to, and in bidding us observe that the baker's lot need not be a bad one; while, again, the men are perfectly justified in pointing to the bad health and the moral infirmities of their order, as an evidence that there must be something essentially wrong in the conditions of their occupation.

We shall all come round to machinery, I doubt not. Surely the journeymen bakers, who have appealed to parliament and the public for protection, will not quarrel with redress because it is brought by machinery. By doing so, they would forfeit the sympathy which has caused already much improvement in their lot. They will not, indeed, have any choice in the matter, now that the fact has become known that the "steam bakeries" in the American cities afford prime bread at 6d. which is here 7d. or 7½d., though, supposing flour to be at the same price, every other requisite

is cheaper in London than at New York. Dear as labour is there, and all tools and materials, the cheapness of machinery and steam, in comparison with the long labour of the human arm and the oven-fire, enables the American bakers to sell cheaper bread.

It appears that the tax paid by London alone is in the form of the needless penny on the sixpence, is above five millions of not dollars, but pounds, sterling per annum. Why should London go on paying this,—not to do anybody any good, but to send hundreds of poor men to the grave every year? We must remember that, including the men's families, 25,000 persons have their lot bound up with that of the journeymen bakers of London.

There would be a very small reduction of numbers in the trade, and little or no reduction of wages. The machinery is of a kind which does not supersede human attendance, while doing the most laborious part of the work. The most important circumstance is the saving of time. If the most laborious processes are got through in one-fifth of the time at present required, there is an end of the long hours. If the baking is still done in the night, the men are not toiling all the day too.

It is a mistake to suppose that bread made by machinery must be of a kind that the public does not like. Because the bread made at the Dock-bread mills has no yeast in it, it does not follow that American and Birmingham bread cannot be fermented. The Birmingham people like what Londoners call bitter bread, and consider London bread insipid: yet both kinds are made in "steam bakeries," as the Americans call the mills. Neither is it true that such machinery must be on a large scale, so as to drive all but wealthy capitalists out of the trade. The bread-making on board the Great Eastern may be considered to be on a large scale: and so may that in such institutions as Greenwich Hospital, Aldershot Camp, and our prisons and workhouses and hospitals: but in much smaller establishments than these the mixing and kneading is done by mechanical means; and, as the newspapers have lately told us, there are small bakehouses in London where it answers as well in proportion to make a dozen loaves in this way as a thousand. Putting all these things together, can there be a doubt that the journeyman baker's grievances are coming to an end, by a better means than an Act of Parliament, which would be turned into ridicule by events as soon as it was passed? There will not be a speedy end—if an end at all—to home-made bread; but the kneading will not long be done by the cook's stout arm. There will not probably be a speedy end to fermented bread; but men will not be wanted to work twenty or forty hours at a stretch to produce it. There will not be a speedy end to private bakehouses, unless the masters show themselves to be less sensible than they are supposed to be. If they were to attempt to go on causing their men to die at forty-two, they must be pushed aside by companies or individuals more fit to be employers of labour: but there is no reason for supposing them to be, as a class, either so foolish or so heartless. As soon as they see how, they will be doing what is

best for everybody, in the great work of supplying the staff of life.

In the interval, the men may do much for themselves by cleanliness, prudence, and self-control. Pure and orderly habits of body and of life, a good home, and an attachment to it rather than to excitements elsewhere, are the best precaution against the worst evils of the baker's craft, and the only remedy for such ills as have not yet been got rid of. Let us hope that some bakers of the existing generation—some, perhaps, whom we know—may live to make us such bread as at present without the present sacrifice of health and comfort. Their best friends are much mistaken if a baker of threescore years and ten will be a stranger spectacle to the next generation than a greyheaded clerk or wheelwright—those very durable members of Friendly Societies! When that happens, the image of men kneading for hours together in an underground hothouse will be regarded as a harbaric picture of the customs of the antique world. HARRIET MARTINEAU.

OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENCES.

NO. I.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain wave,
Her home is on the deep.

So sang Thomas Campbell, just at the close of the last century, when men's minds were full of the achievements of Howe, and Jervis, and Duncan, and Nelson, and so singing he merely embodied the national sentiment and expounded the national faith. Nor has the sentiment been altered or the faith been shaken from his days down to ours. The descendants of the old Sea Kings show still—as ever—the quality of the blood which runs in their veins, as clearly and unmistakably as their nearest continental neighbours exhibit in their strange admixture of fierceness and levity their mixed derivation from the Frank and the Gaul.

And in one sense it is as true now as it was then, that England's true defence is her fleet. In 1805 the presence of our fleet in the Channel effectually prevented the execution of that vast project of invasion for which Napoleon I. only asked for eight-and-forty hours of clear Channel; nor in the teeth of such a Channel fleet as we could now muster is it likely that any other Napoleon would be disposed to attempt a similar manoeuvre. But in some other respects the times are changed.

In the first place, steam has revolutionised naval warfare altogether. Things which were not possible for sailing ships are every-day affairs with steam vessels. There can be no more blockades. Concentration on a given point at a given time may now be made almost matter of certainty. Any accidental circumstance which might draw off or disperse, for however short a time, a Channel fleet, would readily be seized upon by even a moderately skillful adversary as an opportunity for throwing a force on our shores, and, when once there, the "roaring guns" would be powerless to "teach them" any sort of useful lesson.

The enormous improvement in our artillery since the days of the old 32's and the 24-pounder carronades, and the "long 18's," furnishes another serious element in the calculation; in short, it is

not that our Channel fleet has ceased to be the national defence of our shores, but that it has become the *first* line only of those defences, and that it has become necessary to throw up a second line inside.

Of natural fortifications, in the shape of cliffs and rocks, we have plenty; and it might occur to a few innocent folks that the simplest process might be to fill up all interstices between these with a good substantial wall like that of China. The practicability of such a scheme may be deduced from the single fact, that in the 750 miles of coast between the Humber and Penzance, there is an aggregate of no less than 300 on which a landing can be effected by an enemy. In short, to fortify the whole coast round is of course out of the question, and it has been wisely enough, therefore, determined to confine the present operations to the effectual protection of vital points.

The first of these are obviously our dockyards and arsenals. They supply the sinews of our first line of defence, for the efficiency of which it is essential that it should be supported by a line of places where damaged ships can be repaired, and new ones fitted out. Moreover, no one can doubt that any invading enemy possessed of the average amount of brains would make first for our dockyards, in order by their destruction to cripple our first line of defence, as well as endeavour to impair our naval prestige. That these are already provided with certain defences, which have grown up around them in the course of years, is as true as that the same sort of improvements which have rendered a second efficient line of defence essential, have at the same time impaired the efficiency of the existing materials for that line. Many of the old works have been condemned as "obsolete," and "in a state of decay." We have heard of a fort not a hundred miles from the mouth of the Thames, from the guns of which it has long been dangerous to fire even a salute. Add the fact that competent authority has decided that practicable range for bombardment cannot now be estimated at less than 8000 yards* (more than four and a half miles), and here are sufficient reasons at once for a general rearrangement of our second line. We will add two other vital points.

The dockyard, arsenal, manufactory, and depot at Woolwich, the sole depository throughout the country for some of our most important *matériel*, stand in some respects in an attitude of marked isolation from all other similar establishments, and present features which we have no need here to discuss, except to remark that they are utterly undefended by any system of fortification whatever.

The metropolis naturally claims some attention, too, of a peculiar nature. A successful rush upon it, with the enormous consequent commercial loss, has been shown to be one of the greatest national disasters that could by possibility occur.

The readiest highway to Woolwich, Deptford, and London, is of course the Thames, whilst a road to Chatham, our greatest naval establishment in the eastern part of the country, is furnished by the Medway.

* As these lines are passing through the press, there comes news of experiments made with the Lyall's Thomas gun, which is reported to have pitched a 170lb. shot 10,000 yards (nearly five miles and two-thirds).

How these two great highways are protected against the inroad of an invading force at the present moment; how it is proposed to strengthen and complete the existing defences, we propose now to lay before our readers.

We should premise that the works now in progress have been undertaken in pursuance of the recommendations of a report presented to the last session of Parliament by the Commissioners appointed to consider the defences of the kingdom. In order to form an idea of the state of protection afforded to the Thames and Medway by their present defences, and of the nature of resistance which could be offered by them to an invading force, we must place ourselves on board some ship forming part of the attacking squadron. We must suppose our squadron to have succeeded in threading the intricate maze of shoals lying eastward of the Nore, in spite of the removal of buoys (which would, of course, be one of the first steps taken by the Trinity House in case of a war), and to have with equal success run the gauntlet of a fleet of floating batteries, of small draught of water, navigating among those dangerous shoals under the guidance of officers well acquainted with their intricacies, and to have entered on the scene of our illustration abreast of the Nore Light. Let us pause a moment to consider our position. In front of us lie the two estuaries—of the Thames and Medway—divided from each other by a peninsula, the neck of which is about five miles in width, and which measures about twelve miles in length, being, moreover, extended towards us for all purposes of navigation at least a mile and a half further by the accumulation of sand and mud, which is always found at the confluence of rivers. On our right lies the Essex coast, the nearest point being Shoeburyness, famous for its artillery practice-ground along the sands, as well as for a substantial work which may be used either for practice or defence. On our left is the western half of the Isle of Sheppey, separated from the mainland by the Swale, with Minster heights (B), (so called from the remains of the noble old Minster which crown them), next a dead level of a mile or so in width, and then the town, fortifications, and dockyard of Sheerness (A), which stands at the extreme north-western point of the island.

The actual distance from shore to shore, measured from Garrison Point—the north-west corner of Sheerness—across to Shoeburyness, is five miles and a quarter. But here again, for all purposes of navigation, the Channel is wonderfully narrowed. With that into the Medway we shall deal presently. As for the entrance into the Thames, a number of shoals and sands, extending a mile from shore on the north, and as far as the Nore Sand on the south, reduce it to an extreme width of a mile and three quarters. The vessels shown in the illustration are taking the ordinary course for the Thames, which brings them within about three miles of the seaward batteries of Sheerness, and consequently rather more than two miles from any works at Shoeburyness. Now, it is true, that what our sailors of Nelson's days used to speak of with supreme contempt as "playing at long balls," has in our days been brought to a wonderful pitch of perfection—3000 yards, as we have already noticed,

having been fixed for outside bombarding distance—and there can be no doubt that if the batteries at Sheerness and works on the opposite shore were all heavily armed with rifled-cannon, capable of pitching their projectiles to such a distance, an advancing fleet would be seriously harassed by their fire. As, however, the Commissioners do not appear to have thought this worth taking into calculation, but rather to have relied on the operations of the floating batteries at this point, we will continue our course up the river. Leaving one division of our squadron, to whose evolutions we shall presently return, to force their way into the Medway as they may, we proceed to enter the first grand sweep or bend of the River Thames, known as Sea Reach, passing in succession on our right Southend, with its mile and a quarter of pier, Canvey Island, famous for wild-fowl sport, and the terminus of the Thames Haven Railway, where Cockneys embark for Margate; and on the left the Isle of Grain, and a long marsh district, crowned by the high land white cliff and the beautiful old dilapidated church of Cliffe—or, as some will have it, Cloveshoe—of ancient ecclesiastical fame. So far we have been allowed to proceed quietly enough, uninterrupted by any of those massive towers of granite, with foundations under water, and tier upon tier of casemated guns, which barred even the eccentric Admiral Napier from Cronstadt and St. Petersburg; and merely remembering that something of the sort, but done in iron, had been very largely recommended to the notice of the citizens of London by sundry marvellous prints hanging in the shop windows, and representing what looked like an enormous bell standing mouth downwards in the water somewhere about the Nore, and punched full of holes, out of which the muzzles of guns innumerable were dealing death and destruction all round among a hostile fleet of alarming dimensions. However, it is time to be serious, for we have now rounded into the next Reach of the river—the Lower Hope—and a round shot from that battery at the bottom of the Reach on the right has just struck the water ahead of us, sending up a column of spray twenty feet high, and is now ricocheting away past us finely. This is the Coalhouse Point Battery (I), and mounts seventeen guns; and, as we open the Reach more, a second on the opposite shore, about a mile further on, opens on us besides. This is the Shornemead Battery (I), and mounts thirteen guns, both raking us completely as we come up the Reach. The Commissioners, however, we find, though commending the admirable position of these works, do not consider them strong enough, and have recommended the strengthening of that on Coalhouse Point by the addition of a powerful battery in extension of the existing one, bringing the principal part of its fire to bear down the river and across the Channel, but having some guns also bearing up the river in the direction of Gravesend. The opposite battery is also to be subject to the same species of improvement, and considerably enlarged in connection with a line of works, of which more hereafter; whilst a third fort (I) is recommended nearly opposite Coalhouse Point—that is, about a mile and a quarter nearer to us than Shornemead Battery—and under the care of



A. Sheerness B. Minster Beghla; C. Isle of Grain works; D. Oakham Ness works; E. Chatham Lines; F. F. New Chain of Forts; G. Tilbury Fort H. Gravesend Fort;
 I. I. Oulton Point and Shornemund works; K. K. Slough.

this formidable trilateral, which will, when completed, mount in all, as we gather, as many as 150 heavy guns, is to be placed one of those formidable booms, of the difficulty of dealing with which we have had some experience.

We will, however, suppose the prowess of our squadron to have burst this last obstacle, run the gauntlet of, or silenced the three sets of forts, and rounded the point. We are now in the third or Gravesend Reach, and are hardly clear of Shorne-mead Battery when we are opened on simultaneously by old Tilbury Fort, of famous memory (G), as well as by a fort nearly opposite at Gravesend (H), and the existence of which, (though tolerably well known to the yachtsmen who frequent Wates's Hotel—it has another name now, we believe, but we love to stick to the old one), is hardly suspected by most of the thousands who every summer pay their regulation visit to the Paradise of Cockneys. Tilbury affords a fire of thirty-two heavy guns down and across the river, and the opposite fort of fifteen guns; and these are now to be so arranged for crossing fire with those guns of the two batteries we have last past, and which were spoken of as bearing up the river, that in passing up Gravesend Reach we have to run the gauntlet of a double cross fire, in shape like the letter X, as may be seen on reference to the illustration, placing our advancing squadron in almost as uncomfortable a situation as wicked Bishop Hatto's, when the rats poured in on him

From the right and the left, from behind and before.

To complete all, a second boom is to extend—in war time only, of course, like the first, and then fitted with a moveable opening for the passage of friendly vessels—across the river from fort to fort, immediately under the guns of both.

So much for the defences of the Thames properly so called. With the defences, or rather no defences, of Woolwich, we have nothing to do in this paper; moreover, we have got to the limit of our engraving, and that settles the matter.

We now return to the division of our fleet, which we left approaching the entrance of the Medway.

It will of course be observed, both from our illustration and from any map, that Sheerness stands sentry over the entrance of this river. Not only do the shores contract as they approach the mouth, but the shoals before alluded to still further narrow the practicable channel to 730 yards at low water, whilst their position on the left or western bank of the river combines with that of others, further out to sea, in setting the navigable channel well over to the Sheppey; and we are thus driven to the unpleasant conclusion that, in endeavouring to carry our point, we shall be obliged first of all to steer past and nearly parallel with the whole seaward face of the defences at a distance of less than 600 yards, and then round Garrison Point, even nearer than that. However, it is clear we must manage to capture, destroy, or pass the sentry before we can hope to do anything towards attaining our end. There are other works, too, on the opposite shore, of which more anon.

To bombard the dockyard and arsenal not only

would be a great point gained in the way of a heavy blow and great discouragement to the garrison, but would inflict a serious loss on the nation generally, as it seems to us; and it must be a great encouragement therefore to our, or any, invading force to find that the floating batteries once passed, there is no protection for Sheerness from bombardment. We are told it could not be protected by permanent fortifications, except at an expense in the shape of deep sea forts, after the fashion of Cronstadt, which it is impossible to recommend; but it is very frankly added that the dockyard and arsenal are not worth protection. *Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*. How happy the Sheerness folks must feel in their exposed and remarkably attractive position!



Garrison Point.

Well, it appears we can bombard the place when we like. We will therefore postpone the consideration of that business, and turn our attention to the fortifications. They look formidable enough. The north line shows something like half a mile of very serious looking batteries, terminating at Garrison Point in a still more ugly bastion mounting a double tier of guns. This, we are informed, is to be still further strengthened by a powerful casemated battery; whilst another, about half a mile further up the river, just where the land defences come down to the river bank, is to co-operate in commanding the anchorage. To complete the tour of the fortifications, we find the whole landward side enclosed by the usual arrangement of angular Chinese-puzzle-looking walls and ditches known among the initiated as "bastions" and "curtains," through which you pass out into the country, whenever you want an excursion, by means of gates and roads placed sideways and edgeways, and any way but straight, and by rickety wooden bridges with chains, over which it is hardly necessary to be requested "not to drive fast."

On the opposite side of the river, standing in

mud and in water alternately, according to the tide, is an isolated round tower, looking much as though it had strayed from the fortifications, lost its way, and got stuck in the mud; the three heavy guns mounted on its summit bear both down our channel of approach and on the anchorage which is just round Garrison Point. This tower, however, being no more considered sufficient for its duty than its bulkier neighbour over the way, is to be enclosed by another of these casemated batteries, supported by a second on shore close behind it, and whose guns will rake the channel of approach, the whole being again supported by a fort, perched on the only hill in a low straggling bit of ground forming the left or western shore of the mouth of the Medway, and known as the Isle of Grain, and which, in co-operation with another new fort placed on the first rising ground in the peninsula, and which will be by-and-by noticed more fully, is to warn off all intruders on this—to an enemy—most attractive isle.

Such, then, are the formidable materials of the apparatus intended to hinder our approach to the entrance of the Medway. Before, therefore, addressing ourselves to the attempt on so hazardous a pass, let us see if we cannot manage some manœuvre or diversion landward. It would be possible, it is true, to throw a force—if the floating batteries would allow us—on the shore eastward of the Sheerness batteries, just where the ground begins to rise, and just where the shore of Sheppey vanishes out of our engraving; but there is but little water except for a short period at high tide; and the landing of artillery, without which the attack would be useless, would be attended with much risk and difficulty: it would be better to pass round the east coast of the island, and use the Swale as a canal for bringing up at any rate the guns and other stores. From the two ferries there are good roads, one of which is shown in our illustration, and both uniting, pass round under the Minster heights, and find their way across the flat country to Sheerness. Here, however, both the Commissioners and Nature combine to baffle an advance; for the former recommend the erection of a strong fort and two auxiliary towers on the heights which command the road, whilst the level of the flat land in question is such, that on opening a sluice in command of the Sheerness garrison, the whole of the country, from the Medway to the Thames, can be inundated, and Sheerness isolated in a sheet of water.

Supposing, then, our advancing squadron to determine at all hazards to try and force the passage, it would be raked in front as it steered down the channel of approach by the guns of the tower in the mud and its surrounding covered battery, as well as by those of the battery on the shore of the Isle of Grain, the whole seaward face of the north line pouring in a tremendous flanking fire all the while. Supposing it to pass through this *feu d'enfer*, as it rounded the point, gun after gun of each tier of the bastioned work, as well as of the new fortification, would be brought to bear; and as the squadron reached the anchorage, the new battery at the angle of the landward fortifications, and the fort on the Isle of Grain, would

add their quota and place it in the centre of five distinct points of fierce assault.

It is just possible, however, that so tremendous a pounding as this might be endured, and that the expedition might continue its course up the river. In the first, or Saltpan Reach, it would have a little breathing time; but as it turned into the second, known by the quaint name of Ket Hole Reach, it would be saluted with some unmistakable symptoms of a further and most formidable opposition. The channel here narrows to little more than half a mile: the point of the isolated land projecting on the right in our illustration is called Oakham Ness (D). On this point and on the opposite shore two strong forts are to be erected, whose guns shall fire at once down and across the river, concentrating a heavy fire on the advancing squadron; and as soon as these two works shall have been connected by a boom, the Commissioners think that Chatham will be well protected from attack by the Medway.

Still, as in the case of Sheerness, there remains to be seen what opportunity an invading force has of combining a land attack with that by the river; in other words how Chatham, the *bas* of the Medway expedition, is protected landward. It seems admitted that, in this case, there really is something worth protection from bombardment. A building-yard for men-of-war, of very considerable importance, and under process of enlargement at this moment, whilst improvements also in hand in the navigation of the river will still further add to its importance; an arsenal with its usual concomitants, large military barracks and hospitals,—all these seem worth no little attention: so, it appears, thought our immediate ancestors for a century and a half back, as the present works date from 1710, and subsequently. We are informed, too, of another circumstance in connection with what may be called the landward view of the matter, for the same, or very similar, strategical reasons which induced Bishop Gundulph to build that *massy* Norman keep on the banks of the Medway at Rochester, which remains to this day like a huge tombstone to the memory of feudalism, still exist in all their force. Chatham and Rochester lie on the high road from the continent to London. An enemy who had landed near Deal, and was advancing on the metropolis, must attack Chatham before he could cross the river (as there is not another bridge but that at Rochester for miles higher up), or make a considerable detour by Maidstone, and leave so important a garrison in his rear. These military reasons for the importance of Chatham, we think, will be comprehensible; there are others connected with its position relatively to the great chain of chalk hills which strike through Kent and Surrey—that huge natural fortification against southern invasion—not so easily understood of the people, and which shall therefore be let alone.

Chatham is a place much visited by sightseers; its "lines,"—even poor Tom Hood's Mrs. Higginbottom saw them quite plainly, "with the clothes drying on them,"—are or were famous in guide-books; and most people therefore are more or less aware that the dockyard—with its building-sheds, timber-yards, gun-wharf, stores, &c. &c.—lie along

the east bank of the river for about a mile, and at the foot of a steep hill, on the sides of which are perched the barracks, hospital, military church, and other buildings of Brompton; and that it is along the crest of this hill that the "lines" run (E) dipping to the water on each side; and few who have passed into the lines from the Chatham side, will have forgotten that perilous draw-bridge over the deep yawning fosse, and the unpleasant-looking guns pointing out of ominous embrasures, and ready to make a clean sweep of every or anything which might come within their range.

It will also be remembered that, just above the dockyard, the Medway begins writhing about in its course like an eel in convulsions, taking a sudden sweep to N.W., and then an equally sharp one, S.W., and again a third, S., and thus forming the peninsula on which Rochester stands; and some may go on so far as to recollect that the heights occupied by the lines sink very abruptly to the Dover Road, and rise with equal abruptness on the other side, leaving a chasm which is filled by the straggling dirty town of Chatham. A strong fort (Fort Pitt) overhangs this last town, and a chain of works in an unfinished condition stretches thence down to the river, south of Rochester, with the intention of isolating the peninsula on which that city stands.

Chatham lines proper are about a mile and a quarter in length; but a direct line drawn from the northern commencement of these lines to the western termination of those behind Rochester measures quite two miles and a half,—formidable lines one would think—but not, it appears, judged sufficient for the protection of Chatham dockyard in these days, and for the reasons to be mentioned immediately.

No mention has been made, by the way, of certain ancient and decrepit works lying a little further down the river than the dockyard, because they are formally condemned as "obsolete and in a state of decay," and one of them only, Upnor Castle, possesses any interest, and that historical. It appears there are three directions in which an advance may be made on Chatham. The first from the east, by an enemy advancing from the direction of Dover, along the ridge on the left of our illustration, and on which Gillingham Church stands. On this side the celebrated lines are seen to be open to easy capture by escalade; a discovery which has not improbably been gradually forced on the attention of the authorities by the numerous sham attacks which have taken place here during the last few years. Nature, however, has on this side placed the site of the dockyard out of danger of bombardment, by hiding it behind the heights we have before alluded to. This seems reasonably comprehensible, for though a boy may throw one ball over a high wall—or a hundred for that matter—the chances are strong that not one in fifty hits what it is aimed at. Military engineers in like manner, it appears, never bombard what they cannot see, though it be a dockyard a mile long and a quarter wide, and the distance of which, from the mortar-batteries could be accurately measured on the maps—however, far be it from us civilians to quarrel with military wisdom. A

little further on, through the chasm of which we spoke, as the bed of dirty Chatham, a clear view of the dockyard is obtained.

The second attack might be made from the opposite bank of the Medway, and would come from an enemy advancing from the direction of London or the south-coast. On this side the dockyard is completely open, with nothing but the river in front of it.

The third attack would be made by an enemy coming from the northward, who had contrived to land somewhere on the south-coast of the Thames, between the fortifications in Lower Hope and those on the Isle of Grain.

A bold system of defences has been devised for protection against the two first attacks,—it is nothing less than a fresh set of lines altogether,—we are speaking as civilians, and not using the word in its military acceptance.

It is shown in our engraving (FF, &c.), and will be observed to consist of a string of no less than ten new forts, to be connected, as we gather, by other works, beginning near Gillingham Church, a mile outside the Chatham lines, enclosing these as well as those behind Rochester, descending to the Medway half a mile higher up than the present lines, resuming on the opposite bank, and stretching right across the neck of the peninsula, between the Thames and Medway, until they join the works at Shornemead.

For defence against the northern attack, reliance is principally placed upon the natural difficulties of the spot referred to for the necessary landing. One scarcely ever meets with any one who has been there, and our engraving is inevitably on too small a scale to convey any idea of it beyond that it is a tract of very flat marshy country, with plenty of mud between its shore and the navigable channel of the Thames. A more dreary or difficult place for the landing of an army with siege-artillery can be hardly conceived. The engravings of the disastrous attack on the Peiho forts will furnish some notion of the acres upon acres of oozy almy mud, bare, except for a short period of each tide, and intersected by a few streams and creeks, with contents like pea-soup, which form its natural boundary riverward. The river wall surmounted, a vast extent of perfectly flat marshy country is found intersected by a few dykes and a net-work of drains. Osier-beds and sluices;—here and there a shed for the cattle, which are seen roving about by thousands as on a prairie, are almost the only objects which relieve the monotony, with the exception perhaps of the coast-guard station, which looks like a Cayenne for the transportation of refractory coast-guardsmen; or of an occasional farm-house, equally like a place of voluntary exile chosen by a man disgusted with life and strongly bent on justifiable suicide.

When it is added that the whole of this expanse can be laid under water at short notice, it is not surprising to find that a fort—a self-defensible one—perched on a species of hillock at Slough (K), where the land begins to rise out of the marsh, will be sufficient to allay all fears in this quarter. We should add, that it was to this Slough fort we alluded when speaking of the

defences on the Isle of Grain; of course it will add the support of those fortifications to its natural duty of standing sentry over the acres of marsh and mud.

MY ADVENTURES WITH A PASSPORT IN RUSSIA.

PART. I. SHOWING HOW I GOT IT.

It is one of the hardest things in the world to form a just estimate of a foreign country. We seldom see other nations fully, and still more rarely judge impartially of what we do see: such is the temptation to under-rate and over-rate, according to our own special tendency. When we remember the contradictory representations we daily hear and read of the countries in our own immediate neighbourhood, modesty may well restrain us from pronouncing any dogmatic opinion on those which are physically, intellectually, and morally, more remote. In the case of such a country as Russia, the difficulty amounts almost to an impossibility. Hence we have had two diametrically opposite representations of that empire; both false, because both one-sided and exaggerated. According to one set of writers, Russia is a paradise; according to another set, it is a sort of pandemonium. If you believe the one, the late Emperor Nicholas was an angel; if you believe the other, he was little better than a devil. He was neither: he certainly had not an angelic appearance; but, often as I have seen him, I never could detect any signs of the opposite physiognomy in his countenance.

I confess I am not surprised at these contradictory accounts. Russia is, in itself, a land of contradictions. The proverb, that extremes meet, might have originated there. The Russian empire is too large and diversified to be characterised by a single epithet. It includes a larger number of distinct races blended together than any other country in the world: it is the home of almost unnumbered tribes, bound together by the tie of a common government, but separated from each other in every other respect. There you may see, in one nation, all the grades of civilisation, from the most primitive barbarism to the highest refinement.

Even the climate ranges from the most oppressive heat to the most insufferable cold, because its territory extends from the Frozen Ocean almost to the Torrid Zone. Nay, on the same spot, I have seen the thermometer rising to a hundred degrees in the shade, in summer, and becoming useless—through the freezing of the quicksilver—in winter. But even this is not all: I have experienced the extremes of heat and cold on the same day. Travelling once in an open carriage from Siberia to St. Petersburg, one evening in June, after a hot summer day, I was soaked through with the rain; during the succeeding night, my wet clothes froze on my body, and were gently thawed by the next morning's sun; and, by the time 4 P.M. came round again, I was so boiled as to envy a duckling in a pond. The same contradictory elements exist in the manners, habits, and institutions of Russia. I once saw a clover Russian thief pick a pocket with one hand, and cross himself in prayer with the other.

In attempting to account for these incongruities,

we must not lose sight of the fact that Russia is a hybrid: a cross-breed between the east and the west; related to both, yet distinguished from each. This has been its traditional character for ages; but, in modern times, influences have been brought to bear upon it, which have still further complicated its original contrariety. The old Slavonic stock was already the most oriental of all the European races, in habits and tendencies, as well as in geographical position. But the eruption of the Mongol and Tartar hordes, in the thirteenth century, tended to a further isolation of Russia from the rest of Europe: and, though the successors of Tchinggis Khan did not long retain their conquest, they left their footprints upon the nation; and, to this day, you may read upon every page of the national character of Russia, "Tchinggis Khan, his mark."

To make the national discrepancies still more glaring, Peter the Great violently forced back the current of the national life into the westward channel; and his policy has been carried out by his successors, who have artificially imposed an occidental civilisation upon a people whose oriental tendencies are constantly at work. We have too much lost sight of this consideration in our estimate of Russia. We have judged a semi-Asiatic people by a European standard. We expected to see a horse; and, lo! we find it is but a mule; and we express our disappointment in looks of contempt and words of scorn. The fault is our own; we disqualify ourselves from admiring what is really good, by comparing it with what is good in a different order of things. We might have known that the animal was a mule; and, when we have once cheerfully recognised that fact, we may see that even the mule has beauties and good qualities of its own.

This oriental tendency may be detected in every department of Russian thought and life. One of its most striking developments is to be seen in the jealousy with which all foreigners are regarded. The Russians cannot get rid of the impression that you must have some sinister end in view in visiting their country.

An Englishman can scarcely form an idea of the petty annoyances to which a foreigner is subjected on his arrival at St. Petersburg. He is first required to give, in writing, a long and circumstantial declaration on a variety of subjects: he has then to undergo a personal examination at the bureau of the secret police; and woe be to him if he falter, or make a single false step, or say anything that seems inconsistent with his written, and perhaps forgotten, declaration. If his examination prove satisfactory to the police, he will receive a passport at the foreign-office. This precious passport system, now happily abolished by the other northern powers, is carried to absurd lengths in Russia; indeed, if you wished to invent a practical burlesque on the principle of passports, you could not do better than adopt the Russian plan of surveillance. You cannot legally enter a town, or sleep at an inn, or even spend a night at a friend's house, without a passport. You cannot change your residence, even if you were going to live next door, without first sending your passport to the police-office.

To an Englishman, accustomed to move as freely as the air he breathes, without any one daring to ask his business, under fear of being sent about his own business, the passport system is one of the greatest nuisances in existence.

The Russian passport, in addition to the owner's name, address, profession, and so forth, contains a minute description of his personal appearance. Sometimes, in this description, curious mistakes are made. A passport, which I had in St. Petersburg, some time ago, depicted me in terms which led to unpleasant consequences. It so happened, that seven years after I originally received it, I had occasion to return to Russia. I took my passage by the steamer which plies between London and Cronstadt; but we had not lost sight of the shores of England, before I remembered that I had not provided myself with a new passport, and I knew very well that, without it, I could gain no admission into Russia, except as a suspected personage. The next few days were anxious ones for me. At first, the weather being rough and stormy, a touch of sea-sickness made it a matter of supreme indifference to me whether I had a duly attested label or not; but as the weather cleared up, and my mind cleared up with it, I became thoroughly awake to the awkward scrape in which my forgetfulness had placed me. I spoke to no one about it; I kept the secret locked up in my own bosom. But, after much inward musing, I fixed upon a line of action. We were to stay some hours at Copenhagen on our way, and I resolved to spend those hours in an attempt to procure a posthumous passport there.

Unfortunately it was six o'clock in the morning when we landed at Copenhagen, and the captain of our steamer distinctly forewarned us all that he would start precisely at ten. I had only four hours to work in—and so early in the morning, too! I hired the first car I saw, and, promising the driver a double fare, ordered him to gallop off to the English embassy. I had become acquainted with the Secretary of Legation during a former visit to Copenhagen; but the Ambassador, the late Sir Henry Wynn, who had been in England at that time, unfortunately I had never seen. My great hope was, of course, in the secretary. What was my dismay when I found that he was not at home! I inquired for Sir Henry, and ascertained, for my consolation, that he was at that moment comfortably dreaming of diplomacy in all the luxury of eider-down quilts, and would not be visible till nine o'clock. Off to the Russian embassy, to see if early rising is a virtue universally abjured in the diplomatic world! Alas, I found that his Russian Excellency was as comfortably preserved from the toil of office as his brother of England. The only hope left to sustain my patience was, that the Russian Excellency would be visible an hour earlier than the English. Full of gratitude to the Russian diplomatic world for being a-head of the English in the virtue of early rising, but otherwise in no very pleasant frame of mind, I went to renew my acquaintance with Thorwaldsen's celebrated group of statues, the Christ and the Twelve Apostles. The sublime composure, the serene majesty of the Christ (in

cent head is reproduced), with the Divine promise inscribed above,—“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”;—did certainly calm my angry feelings, and made me heartily ashamed of giving way to petty annoyances. I left the church in a serene frame of mind than I had entered it, and better fitted patiently to bear whatever might be my lot.

As it turned out there was enough to endure; two of my precious four hours were gone; and I had not yet advanced a single step towards obtaining the indispensable passport, and only two short hours remained before the steamer would start positively for Cronstadt, and I should perhaps be left behind.

The clock was striking eight when I re-entered the Russian Embassy. As I was sitting in the reception-room, a shabby-looking man, robed in a dirty old dressing-gown, passed by me and entered a room.

“Why did you not speak to his Excellency?” asked an attendant.

“Is that the ambassador?”

“Of course it is; what did you expect?”

I could scarcely realise it. I knew that the baron was one of the most accomplished diplomats of Russia, a thorough classical scholar, a master of most of the modern languages, and the idol of the drawing-room; and, accustomed though I was to the negligence of a Russian *deshabillé*, I could scarcely imagine that the shabby-looking old gentleman, whom I had seen, was really the elegant and polished representative of majesty. So much for judging by outward appearance. When the baron re-appeared, I scrutinised him more closely; a massive projecting brow, thick, bushy eyebrows, stern piercing grey eyes, and a most hard and resolute mouth and chin, gave no small indication of intellectual power, and, at the same time, proclaimed that that power was under the control of a stern and relentless will.

When I had explained my business, he severely and almost angrily asked me, why I troubled *him* about a passport.

“Go to the office,” he added, “and give it to one of the clerks; he will see that it is properly viséd.”

“Ah, but, your excellency, I have no passport,” said I, seeing that my only chance was to be perfectly frank with him.

“What do you mean?”

“The fact is, I forgot to procure one in England.”

“And you have the impudence to come here and expect me to give you one, without knowing anything about you!”

I frankly told him my history.

“And you expect to palm off that plausible tale on me!” he said. “It sounds very pretty; but I would recommend you to go on the stage—there is a sphere for your talents! A very likely story! An Englishman, coming to Russia, which the press of his country is every day crying down as the most despotic and restrictive country in the world, actually *forgets* his passport! A very

passport!—*you could not get one, sir*,—you are too well known to our agents."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, indeed. You Englishmen fancy that we know nothing about you. The fact is, we know more about you than you do yourselves: we have our agents in England, who know more of your affairs than you imagine. It is an important part of my duty to prevent improper persons from entering Russia; and how am I to know that you are not an improper person?—indeed, you look very much like one."

Up to this time I had been perfectly cool; but at this point I was roused into uttering some strong expressions, which I had cause to repent afterwards. I had forgotten that (as will soon be seen) I was still in the ambassador's power. Leaving him under a strong feeling of irritation, I proceeded to the English Embassy, and had an interview with Sir Henry Wynn. I was delighted to find a frank, bluff, fine old English gentleman, who heartily expressed his wish to help a fellow-countryman to the utmost of his power. Still, he was rather incredulous at first, and made the same objections to my story, though in politer terms, as the Russian minister had done.

"Of course I don't mean to doubt your word, sir; but your story is strange—very strange," was the substance of his comment. When I alluded to the Secretary of Legation, he said: "It is very strange and very unfortunate that the only gentleman you know at the Embassy should happen to be the very man that is away."

However, I succeeded at last in convincing him that I was no impostor, and that my statement, however strange, was true. Forthwith I received a passport; nay, the dear old gentleman was so very kind as to fill up the form in his own handwriting. Perhaps you suppose that my difficulties were now over. Far from it: they had only commenced. I had to go back to the Russian Embassy to have my passport counter-signed; and this was the necessary process which I had forgotten in the warmth of my indignation. How to face his Russian Excellency again? that was the question. There was no help for it; so, putting a bold face on the matter, I went to the office. A clerk disappeared with my passport: and, in his absence, my solitary reflections were anything but pleasant. After the scene which had taken place that morning, it was but a forlorn hope to expect that I should be more favourably received now. I remember distinctly that there was a clock in the office, which, in the death-like stillness, worried me by so deliberately ticking off my precious moments. I looked up at the dial: it was close upon ten o'clock. In a few minutes the steamer would be gone. Presently, the clerk returned, and told me that the Baron wanted to see me himself. "Oh!" thought I, "in this case, even such a simple thing as the *visé* of a passport cannot be managed by a clerk."

When I entered the room where the ambassador sat, I found him conversing in an undertone with a gentleman whom I supposed to be his secretary. I was the subject of their conversation; and they evidently did not intend that I should understand what they said, for they chose the Russ to talk

in. Now, though an Englishman by race, I was born in the Russian empire, and the Russian tongue was familiar to me from my childhood; was, indeed, something like a second mother-tongue. So I understood every word they said.

"It is very curious," said his excellency: "if the English Ambassador had not known him, he surely would not have given him such a passport as this; and yet, if the fellow had known the ambassador, he would not have been fool enough to come here first this morning."

I could not gainsay the logic; it was evidently a deep mystery to the ambassadorial intellect. Unable to solve the mystery, he looked up, and, fixing his stern searching eyes on me, seemed as if he would read me through and through. I met his eye without quailing before it. Clever diplomatist as he was, I felt that I had checked him; and the consciousness gave me assurance and strength. For a few moments, the scrutinising looks that passed between us seemed likely to merge into a battle of eyes. Thanks to a singular power I have of keeping my eyes open without flinching, I gained the victory in this preliminary skirmish. Finding that he could not frown me down, the Baron proceeded to question me; and the diplomatic fencing commenced in right earnest.

"Are you acquainted with Sir Henry Wynn?" he asked.

Now I knew, from his conversation with the secretary, which way that question tended; and, feeling that it was dangerous, I resolved to parry it.

"Your Excellency has already informed me," I said, "that you know more about us than we do ourselves: you surely need not apply to me for such a paltry piece of information; about a matter, too, relating not to England, about which you know so much from your agents, but to Copenhagen, which lies under your Excellency's own eyes."

"If you know Sir Henry Wynn, why did you apply to me for a passport this morning, instead of going to him at once?"

"Your Excellency must pardon me for presuming to correct you: I did not tell you that I knew Sir Henry; I merely left it to your Excellency's universal knowledge." Not that I could not satisfactorily answer his question; but I began to feel a sort of malicious pleasure in teasing him; and, moreover, by irritating him, I hoped to divert his attention from the original question which was so dangerous.

"Answer my question, sir! Why did you not go first to Sir Henry?"

"Aha!" thought I, "I have gained my object: his Excellency has forgotten the most dangerous and most important part of the question." Aloud I said: "Simply because your Excellency happens to be an earlier riser than Sir Henry; and the steamer by which I came was to have sailed at ten o'clock."

After some more passes between us, in which I twitted him again, and more than once, about his universal knowledge—and this time not merely because I was amused at his official sensitiveness, but because I thought that that was the way in which I could the soonest bring the interview to a close—the ambassador gave up the cross-exami-

nation—as if owning himself foiled for once by the simplicity of a true story.

"I can make nothing of the fellow," he said in Russ, turning to the secretary: "what to do?"

"I don't see what you can do but *visé* the passport; I scarcely think it advisable to dishonour the English ambassador's pass except in extreme cases."

"This is an extreme case."

"Scarcely: your Excellency has no proof."

"But there is strong suspicion."

"Exactly; and therefore I would affix the *private mark of suspicion to the passport*."

Accordingly, my passport was countersigned and returned to me; and I hurried back to the

steamer. I found it still at the quay, puffing and snorting, and evidently waiting for me. It was with inexpressible satisfaction and relief that I stepped again on deck, and received the congratulations of the captain and my fellow-passengers, to whom I told my story by way of apology for detaining them beyond the proper time. So far I had triumphed; but I had overheard enough to make me dubious of the final result. "The private mark of suspicion!"—those terribly mysterious words kept haunting me all the way to Cronstadt. How much might they imply? I knew that they portended something unpleasant: I afterwards ascertained that they might involve Siberia and the knout. I examined the passport



at leisure, and tried to detect the private mark of suspicion. I could see nothing. It might be in the form of one of the letters; or it might be in the flourish at the end of the Baron's signature. I studied the document as I have never studied any similar document before or since. But at last I gave up the attempt in despair.

PART II. SHOWING WHAT BECAME OF IT.

WHEN we arrived off Cronstadt, a number of Russian gentlemen came on board the steamer to examine our passports. I was summoned into the saloon, where I found the Board of Examiners sitting in solemn conclave, with an old naval officer at their head. Now it so happened, by one of those freaks of fortune, or, rather, one of those appointments of Providence, which seem so strange

to us mortals, that I subsequently became well acquainted with the president of the Board; and he afterwards gave me a piece of information which it is necessary for my readers to possess at this stage, in order that they may understand the really perilous position in which I stood. It seems, that, just about that time, some attempts had been made to assassinate the late Emperor Nicholas; and, in consequence of those attempts, the secret police were more than usual on the alert. Moreover, they had just been informed by their agents in London that some desperate Poles, who had dodged Nicholas during his visit to England in 1844, but had been kept at bay by the admirable precautions of the English police, were about to proceed to St. Petersburg for the express

purpose of murdering the Czar. These Poles, whether real or suppositious, had applied for passports in London; but (to make the case against me blacker) being well known to the Russian agents, and having thus been foiled in their attempts, they were expected to proceed to some intermediate foreign port—such as Hamburg or Copenhagen—and try to procure some passports there. My case seemed to tally with this description so completely, that the reader will at once perceive my danger. Only a week before we arrived at Cronstadt, a man had come by steamer from Hamburg, and had been taken up on suspicion; being unable to clear himself, he was thrown into prison; and, after describing his case to me, the old president subsequently added, very significantly and mysteriously, "and where he is now—God knows."

When I entered the saloon for examination, I found the Board engaged in a learned discussion on my name. I have the misfortune to possess a very long and uncommon family designation, which, as far as I know, is shared by only two other families in England; and the unfamiliar sound at once increased the suspicions and provoked the criticisms of my scrutineers. Happily, the debate was in Russ; and I inwardly chuckled over the advantage which my knowledge of that language gave me.

"Who ever heard of such a name in England?" said one of the Board, who evidently prided himself on his supposed knowledge of the English. "If it had been '*Shmeed*,' or '*Veeliams*,'—but '—!'" and he repeated my name, torturing it most abominably in the pronunciation.

"Have any of you, gentlemen, ever heard of an English name like that?" asked the old president.

"No!" was the universal response.

"Mr. Interpreter," continued the president, addressing an Englishman, or pseudo-Englishman, beside him, "ask the captain of the steamer" (who was standing behind) "if he knows any other Englishman of that name; but mind you put the question in a whisper, that the man may not overhear you."

The mysterious whisper took place, while I had considerable difficulty in maintaining due control over my risible faculties; and at length the interpreter said aloud, in Russ, that the captain knew no other Englishman of that name, and had never heard it before he saw me on board.

"It can't be an English name," said one.

"It must be an assumed name," added another.

"You mean because he wished to conceal his real name," said the English scholar.

"Now gentlemen," resumed the president, "look at the man himself; does he look like an Englishman?"

"No!" shouted the commissioners in a chorus.

"Look at him well: what does he look like?"

"A Pole!" cried all, at once.

"Woe is me!" thought I: "this is becoming serious."

"Mr. Interpreter, ask the captain aloud if he has any Poles on board; and, while he is asking the question, you, gentlemen, fix your eyes upon the man, and see if he blanches."

Thus kindly forewarned, I screwed up my nerves, not to refrain from starting, but to keep my countenance. The question was asked; some half-a-dozen pairs of eyes were sternly fixed on me; I am not sure, but I believe, that I looked tolerably unconcerned.

"He does not blench," said one.

"Mr. Interpreter," continued the president, "ask the man if he has ever been in Poland."

"Yes, I have," was my answer.

"Does he speak Polish?"

"No."

"Does he speak Russ?" would, I thought, be the next question: but the wisecracks never thought of that question which might have perilled my position.

After several other questions had been asked and answered, the Board began to deliberate on my case; and, as they never dreamt that I knew Russ, they suffered me to remain and overhear a debate so interesting and important to myself. They were unanimous in thinking, that it was a very suspicious case indeed; but, when they came to consider what they should do to me, they fortunately differed in their opinions. The majority seemed inclined to adopt the severest measures, and send me off to prison, as they had sent the Pole the week before; and, in that case, my fate might have resembled his; and I might never have returned to this country to record my adventures. But there was a minority who thought that course too premature and harsh, and wished to transfer me to the Minister of the Secret Police at Saint Petersburg. Seeing that the violent party were likely to win the day, and not being ambitious to share the Pole's fate, I thought it high time to make myself heard. I took advantage of a reasonable moment to ask Mr. Interpreter, if the Board wanted my presence any longer.

"I don't know that they will let you off at all," he replied, with all the pomp and importance he could assume.

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Why, it seems that yours is a very suspicious case; and the majority of the examiners think of ordering you to prison," he replied, seeming to take a petty delight in trying to frighten me.

"Indeed!" I said: "then will you be good enough to interpret what I say to the Board; word for word, mind you."

The Interpreter at once saw the false position in which he had placed himself, and wished to shuffle out of it. But I held him to his duty, and persisted in my demand to address the Board. By this time, their attention was drawn toward us; and I proceeded:—

"Gentlemen, the Interpreter tells me, that you think of sending me to prison."

My words were not faithfully rendered; they were modified so as to soften the guilt of the Interpreter's presumption and imprudence. Still, as he gave the substance of what I had said, I took no notice of his gloss, and proceeded to draw their attention to the fact, that my passport was in the English ambassador's own handwriting. Perceiving that this seemingly insignificant circumstance had (as, from my knowledge of Russian nature, I had anticipated) made a deep impression on them,

I went on to clinch the nail by telling them, that it was useless to frighten me by threats of imprisonment; because I was well known to some of the leading English residents (in Saint Petersburg), who were expecting my arrival, and would be sure to make inquiries. This settled the matter; and they transferred me at once to the Chief of the Secret Police at Saint Petersburg.

I was out of danger, but by no means out of the way of annoyance. I was put under police surveillance; and my passport was withheld for many days. Day after day I had to dance attendance on the Foreign Office, and the Secret Police Office; I was driven backward and forward, like a shuttlecock, from the one to the other.

At the Foreign Office, I was examined by a gentleman who was an adept at the task. It would be useless to record all the questions and answers which passed between us; but the conclusion of my interview with him is worthy of detailed recital.

"Were you ever in Russia before?" he asked.

"Yes."

"How long ago?"

"It is seven years since I left Russia."

At a sign from my examiner, an attendant left the room: and, while I was answering some other questions, he returned with a paper in his hand.

"Here is your old passport."

I was perfectly amazed. Not more than a minute or two could have elapsed since I said that I had left Russia seven years before. During these seven years, hundreds of thousands of travellers must have come and gone, and hundreds of thousands of passports been deposited at the Foreign Office; and, yet, at a minute's notice, the officials could lay their hand on the passport that was wanted. The whole thing seemed done by magic. Such is the perfection to which the passport system has been carried in Russia. With the exception of a few criminals, or reputed criminals, who have eluded justice, the Russian Government could say where every individual Russian is at this moment. It is the triumph of oriental despotism.

"How is this?" said my examiner, after turning over the leaves of my old passport. "You now call yourself 'John Knox —' but, in your old passport, you are called 'John Edward —': an alias? Eh?"

For the moment, I was dumfounded; I could not imagine how such a mistake could have crept in: and, from a sinister smile, which played on my tormentor's countenance, I concluded that he took my silence to be a confession of guilt. But, happily, a bright idea suddenly flashed across my mind. A Russian frequently signs his father's baptismal name (after his own), with the affix "ov," which means "son of;" thus, in applying for a passport seven years before, I might have subscribed myself "*John Edwardov*," (*John, son of Edward*); and the Russian copyist might easily make a mistake, and set my name down as "*John Edward*" in the body of the passport. This I suggested to the examiner.

"Never fear," said the imperturbable functionary. "The truth will come out; you must have signed your name yourself at the end of the passport. Here it is—'*John Edwardov*.'"

"Thank God, it is all right," thought I, breathing more freely; for, in the suspicious circumstances in which I stood, the most insignificant atom of evidence for or against me acquired a fictitious importance.

"Ah! but here is a more material discrepancy," continued the relentless functionary: "the description given of you in your old passport does not at all correspond with your present appearance."

"Seven years necessarily make a great change in a man's appearance."

"Yes, but not such a change as this: I cannot recognise your portrait in this description. Listen. 'Face round'—I call your face decidedly long: 'Hair, red'—your hair is nearly black. 'Complexion, fair'—your complexion is what I should call dark. 'Chin, smooth and round'—it is true your whiskers may have begun to flourish since, but your chin could scarcely have lengthened so much in so short a space of time."

I was utterly dismayed. I do not know that I had ever read that striking description of my person before.

"I met with a severe accident a few years ago," I gasped out. "It injured my health, and I dare say I do not look quite the same as I did before the accident."

"And has that accident dyed your hair as well?"

"It must have been a mistake of the person who filled up the passport."

"Ordinarily I do not notice such discrepancies," said the stern and merciless official: "but, when there are other suspicious circumstances, they become important elements in the decision; and, as yours is too serious a case to be left to my discretion, I must transfer you to the Chief of the Secret Police."

The Chief of the Secret Police was then no less a man than the celebrated Count Orlov; the favourite of the late Emperor Nicholas, and the Chief Plenipotentiary of Russia at the Paris Conference which terminated the Crimean war. He was the man, to whom Nicholas is reported to have said, in one of his saddened moods, "There is only one honest man in Russia:" and, while the favourite was bowing his acknowledgment of the supposed compliment, never for a moment doubting, that *he*, the immaculate Orlov, was the "one honest man," whose presence the clear-sighted autocrat recognised and rejoiced in, Nicholas dispelled the illusion by quietly adding—"and that is myself." Yet I knew very well that no one had greater influence over Nicholas; and that, next to the Czar himself, no one had so much power in Russia. This was the formidable personage, with whom I was about to be brought into such close contact; and, under the awkward-looking circumstances which surrounded me, I confess that I shrank from the ordeal. I resolved to be perfectly frank with him; and I believe it was my frankness that saved me.

My interview with the Chief of the Secret Police was of the most exciting character. A first my worst suspicions seemed about to be realised. Count Orlov gazed at me, and sounded me in the most searching and inquisitive manner. He questioned and cross-questioned me severely

be turned me inside out, and outside in again; and, if I had faltered for a moment; if I had equivocated in the slightest degree; if I had made a single statement that was untrue; he would have detected me. But he could not discover a single flaw in my statement: and, when he had finally released me from my painful position, I left him with a higher opinion of his character than I had previously entertained, and a more intense detestation of the system which required a man of such superior attainments to inflict petty tortures, and, to make unworthy inquiries into the purposes and intentions of a stranger who conducted himself fairly and openly.

But, long before I had done with Count Orlov, and, therefore, long before I had obtained my passport, I had become thoroughly sick and tired of the spies, who, I felt, were upon my track wherever I went. I could not walk into the streets without some one dogging my steps; I could not sit down to a meal without some curious eyes watching my movements; I could not retire to my bed-room without some one standing as sentinel outside the door,—it was horrible! The very air seemed to be oppressive and stifling. In those few days of police surveillance, I learnt to sympathise with the feelings which drove poor Tasso to madness. At last, I could endure it no longer; I could not resist the desire to give them the slip for one day; just for one sweet day of liberty. I consulted a friend; and he told me that I could easily do it by spending the day at Cronstadt. It was true I could not legally go there without a passport; but it was customary for the English residents, instead of showing their passports to lay down a piece of money, at the ticket office. This practical mode of thwarting the obnoxious spies of the Secret Police by a bribe had become so universal and so successful that it was quite possible to escape detection, so I resolved to take my friend's advice.

Early the following morning I went to the quay, put down the *honorarium* instead of the passport, together with the fare, at the ticket office, and took my place, undetected as I thought, on board the steamer which plies between St. Petersburg and Cronstadt. It was a glorious morning in June, and I was in the highest spirits. The sense of relief, the consciousness of liberty, was exquisitely sweet, clouded though it was by a fancy, for one moment, that a pair of eyes, belonging to a somewhat official-looking gentleman in plain clothes, were fixed upon me rather suspiciously; but I resolved to shake off this gloomy impression, and, in spite of all the police in Russia, to enjoy myself for the day. And I did. I spent the day in examining the famous fortifications of Cronstadt, which Sir Charles Napier was to have taken in a week, but which, I believe (though not a military man), the united forces of England and France could not have captured in a year. In the afternoon, I was at the pier in good time for the last steamer to St. Petersburg. I put down the small bribe again instead of the passport, but, to my dismay, the clerk would not receive it.

"You must show me your passport," he growled.

"But is it not usual for gentlemen to lay down a coin instead of the passport?"

"I have nothing to do with that; I cannot let you pass without a passport."

"I have not one with me."

"Where is it?"

"At the Foreign Office at St. Petersburg."

"Then you can't pass."

"What am I to do? Can I write for it?"

"Certainly not; you must apply for it personally; otherwise, you'll never get it."

"Then I will go and apply for it in person."

"You will not be allowed to return to St. Petersburg without a passport."

"What am I to do, then?"

"I don't know."

Now, as I saw other gentlemen admitted without passports, I came to the conclusion that I was a marked man. I was regularly caught in a trap. But how to get out of it? It was evident I could not get back to St. Petersburg, so I resolved to take it coolly, to sleep comfortably at an inn that night, and in the morning, perhaps, some mouse might be found that would kindly nibble through the cords of the net in which I was caught. I went to the English hotel and ordered a dinner and a bed. As I was sitting at dinner, sipping my wine with that feeling of independence which, as an Englishman, I naturally felt at "mine inn," a waiter approached me with—

"Did you order a bed here, sir?"

"Yes, I did."

"Would you be so good as to give me your passport, sir?"

"What do you want with my passport?"

"We must show it at the Police Office."

"What! can I not sleep at an inn without showing my passport?"

"Certainly not, sir; it is against the law."

"I have no passport with me."

"Oh, then, you cannot sleep here, sir."

After repeating the experiment at another inn, with precisely the same result, I was obliged, as a last resource, to walk out into the streets. It was so light and bright, under that northern sky, that it looked all night as if the sun had just set; and I felt jolly enough, and could scarcely regret that I had been obliged to turn out. But, about two o'clock, I met a policeman, who asked me what I was doing in the streets at that time of night, when honest folks were in bed. This courteous question I answered in the Quaker fashion, by asking him what was his opinion of his own honesty, as he was in the same predicament with myself.

"Show me your passport," was the only reply he condescended to give.

"Confound the passport!" thought I. "These infernal spies will imprison me at last."

"Well, where is your passport?"

"I have none with me."

"Then you cannot walk the streets at this time of night without a passport."

"What am I to do? I cannot go to an inn, because they won't let me in without a passport; I cannot go home, because they won't let me out without a passport; and now you say I must not

walk the streets without a passport; where am I to go?"

"I don't know."

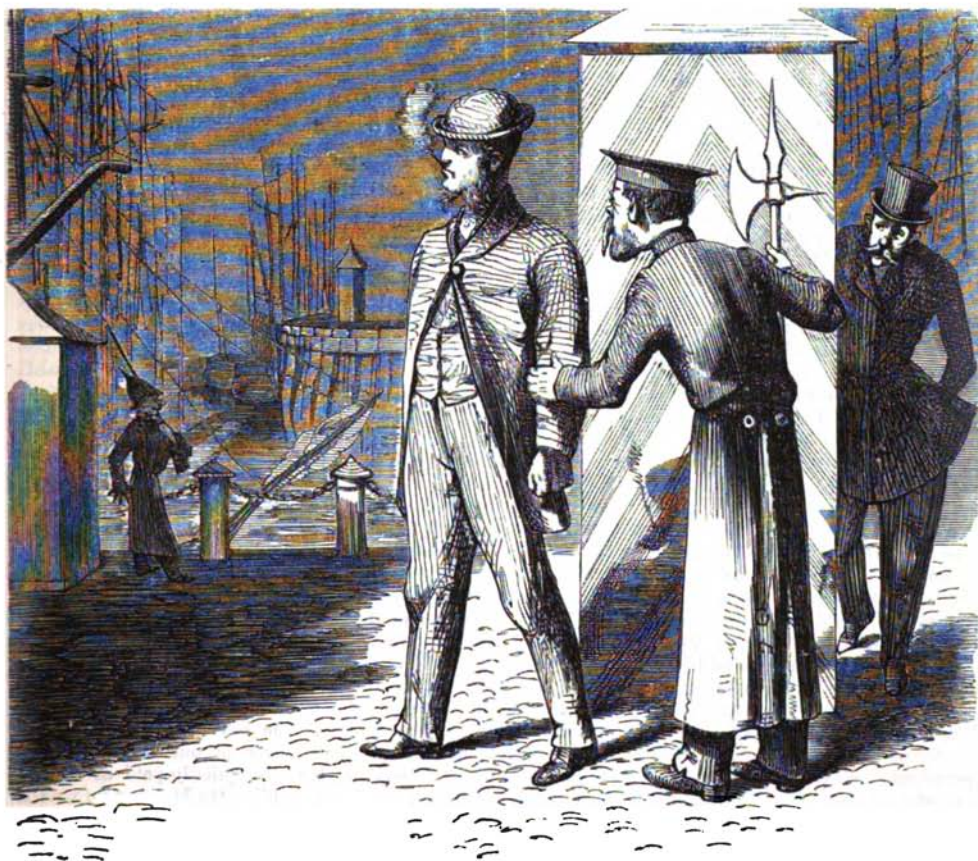
"May I go and throw myself into the sea, off yonder pier, without a passport?"

"Oh, yes; you may do *that*."

That is about the only thing one can do without a passport in Russia. The result of it all was, that I surrendered myself to the worthy Minister of Justice (or injustice), and was actually conveyed to St. Petersburg under the care of that very pair of eyes which had looked so suspicious on board the steamer. I afterwards discovered that those prying

eyes had never lost sight of me throughout the day; they had dogged me from fort to fort, from inn to inn, from street to street, and were never taken off from their guard over my innocent head till they had seen me safe and sound in St. Petersburg. Many thanks for their loving watchfulness and care.

When I look back on these adventures with a passport in Russia, I cannot but feel how they served, after all the annoyance, to enhance the blessings and value of a free country. The passport system in Russia is a relic of Oriental barbarism; a badge of slavery; a sign that the Rus-



sians can call neither body nor soul their own, but must have them ticketed and labelled with their owner's name. "Alexander II., Autocrat of all the Russias, passport No. 5471." It was all very well for our ancestor Gurth the swineherd and the slave to endure; but free-born men, living in a free country, will never bend their necks to wear a collar. The passport is another sort of ticket-of-leave, and the system is one equally associated with villany and corruption and much public inconvenience. To submit to the ignominy of carrying a label about you, certifying who you are, as if you word were not enough; to be obliged to show this ticket to every little pettifogging functionary, who may choose to de-

mand it; to be liable to a cross-examination by said functionary on every little minutia every time he happens to have a grudge against you, or fancies that you have not bribed him liberally enough; this is a degradation to which none but a convicted criminal ought to be subjected. I have been in almost every country in Europe, but I have seen no country where the brand is burnt in so deeply as in Russia. When I last returned home from the North; when I trod once more upon the free English soil, and breathed once more the free English air, I felt a weight taken off my soul; I experienced a sense of returning strength and manhood; and I thanked God that my home is in glorious Old England!

LAST WEEK.

It is the fashion to say that the day of great men is at an end, and people discuss the subject much as follows. There is such a uniformity of education and of opportunity, that there is very little to distinguish A. from B. Hero-worship expired with the newspaper and the railway. In order that it may exist there must be a dim shadowy background. Men fall prostrate before a cloud; but where all is clear and palpable to the senses, they handle, they criticise, they discuss, they doubt. Hence the reverence for the heroes of antiquity. Imagine the Right Honourable Pericles, member for the Hymettus Burghs, to be well dissected from day to day in the "Clerkenwell Courier," as the clear-sighted editor could dissect him when a War Peloponnesian, or other, was in progress, which the great statesman did not conduct exactly in conformity with the views of that eminent publicist. Fancy Demosthenes on the wrong side, or indeed on the right one, and how, to the eyes of party men, those roaring sentences, which we were all taught to admire in our youth, would degenerate into "miserable stuff," "nisi prius pleading," "catchpenny trash," and so forth. The man lived and spoke two thousand years and more ago. The human race have ceased to care about Philip of Macedon and his doings. Indeed the only remains now of what was once deemed so important are a few Klephts owning a doubtful allegiance to a Bavarian Kinglet (who was it lived at Munich when Demosthenes wore wig and gown?), and the tirades of eloquent abuse with which young gentlemen, struggling for First Classes, are so familiar. If our Own Correspondent had accompanied Julius Caesar during his wars in Gaul, and Mr. Reuter had helped us hour by hour to the very latest intelligence of his doings amongst the Belgæ and others, how some amongst us would have cried him up as a "fine energetic fellow," a "soldier to the back-bone;" but how the peace-party would have groaned over him, and dubbed him a monster in human form, a cat-o'-nine-tails in the right hand of Destiny! How his fame would have gone up and down exactly as he was fortunate or unfortunate in his operations. *Excelsior* is the motto of the bubble; it must soar upwards, and upwards still. Let it pause for a moment in its flight, and all that remains of its iridescence and its glory is a drop or two of soap and water, not over clean.

Such is the fashion of talk about modern greatness—or rather about the possibility of greatness in modern times. There is some truth and some untruth about the theory. That it can scarcely be altogether true would appear from the fact that there are three or four names just now which are uppermost in the minds of all, and the bearers of these famous names really are what the old Greek hexameter men would have called shepherds of the people. There is Joseph Garibaldi for one. Who will say that the days of hero-worship are gone by when we read of the homage paid to that great chief? Aspiring young men! the real trouble is not so much to get your greatness acknowledged as fairly to earn the acknowledgment by noble deeds enacted for the good of others, without

selfish motive. It may well be that in very few cases the homage of the human race will be paid in so immediate and palpable a form as it now is to that great Italian leader. It is not allowed to every man to put on a red jersey—to conquer a kingdom—and to give it away for the greater happiness of all concerned within six months. Men, however, may be great in other ways. No doubt Michael Faraday in his laboratory—just on the eve, or on the morrow, of a great discovery—receives his reward as well as Joseph Garibaldi at the conclusion of a well-fought day. After all, the *evviva*s, and the laurel crowns, and the triumphal arches do not count for much. The thought that he has been the instrument in the hands of Providence to put an end to so much misery, must be that which makes such a man as Garibaldi feel happy in himself. There is something about his ways of going on which makes his detractors appear ridiculous. Even Dr. Paul Cullen squirts dirty water at him with an uncertain hand. The Papal people, who are rather adepts at cursing than otherwise, can't get their curses to hold water when they curse Garibaldi. As you read the head-roll of mediæval abuse, and the curses come rumbling out like potatoes out of a sack, you feel that they are quite out of place. It is Dr. Stop cursing Obadiah in his vitals, and in all the acts of his life, because he has tied a string round a hag in too complete a manner. Joseph Garibaldi is not "iniquitous," "impure," "the enemy of God and man," because he dislikes Cardinal Antonelli, and would much prefer that Pio Nono should take up his residence somewhere else than at Rome. Garibaldi has been attacked in a far less virulent manner, and in a much more wholesome spirit by public writers in our own country. Of this there is no great reason to complain, because he has been handled just as any great Englishman would have been handled who was—what is the usual phrase?—"occupying a prominent position in public life."

We do criticise the acts of our leaders in this country in a very unsearing way, and well is it for them and for us all that this is done, so that we may not fall into the senilities and anilities of hero-worship. But never in our time has this *amende honorable* been so quickly paid as in the case of Joseph Garibaldi. On Monday he was a kind of crazy buccaneer for going to Sicily. On Tuesday he was the remarkable man whose story was like an Arabian tale. On Wednesday our great thinkers wagged their fingers at him, after the fashion of the witches in Macbeth, for thinking of an attempt upon the mainland. The Sicilian rocket was to fall down by mere gravitation as the Neapolitan stick. On Thursday, the "remarkable-man theory" was hrought to light once more. His acts stultified prophecy, and defied criticism. Dobbs admitted his error. On Friday it appeared that Dobbs was right after all. Garibaldi, who was at best a splendid partisan leader—a fact which Dobbs was free to admit—had attempted a bit of statesmanship—really now! Worse still, he was about to fight a battle against regular troops, and the result was not only to the ingenious Dobbs, but to every dear old gentleman in the Senior United Service Club, but a foregone

conclusion. On Saturday the great battle was not only greatly fought, but greatly won. Garibaldi was a great General. Dobbs had put his *visa* on him. It was all right until Garibaldi's first reverse, when his English friend would have turned upon him, and denounced him as an impostor. Yes, Garibaldi had proved to Dobbs's satisfaction that he could set a squadron in the field; but let him still beware of statesmanship.

Well—well, Arthur Wellesley, after his Peninsula and Waterloo, was dubbed by the late Daniel O'Connell a "stunted corporal," but he survived it. On Sunday poor Garibaldi had committed a great error, he had thrown himself into the arms of Mazzini, or Mazzini had thrown himself into his arms—in point of fact, something was wrong about the embraces; and Dobbs, admitting all the while that Garibaldi had about him the makings of a great general, was more and more convinced that as a statesman he was weak, shallow, and incompetent. On Monday it turned out that Garibaldi, who had had some small business on hand (while Dobbs was dining out in London), such as meeting a regular army with his hasty levies, coming to an understanding with the Sardinian Government, maintaining the requisite attitude against Lamoricière, whilst Lamoricière still existed as a political and military entity, had really not done so very badly. He had had a very difficult game to play at Naples whilst engaged with the enemy in front, and had only spare minutes to play it in. He had, however, contrived to keep now one ball, now another, in the air until the moment had arrived for decisive action; when, lo! he was found to have done the very thing which Dobbs himself had pointed out as the only proper course—namely, handed the southern portion of the Italian peninsula and the island of Sicily, which by his wisdom and his courage he had all but purged of the Bourbons and their adherents, over to Victor Emmanuel. True to the declaration of the last ten years of his life, Garibaldi still believed that the best chances of independence and safety for his country lay in the union of all the provinces under one sceptre. Dobbs withdrew the epithet of *Massaniello*—and was appeased.

Has not this been the tone of a certain portion of English society towards Garibaldi during the last few months? No great harm is intended, but the habit of English political life is to drag down all men to the intellectual level of the speakers or writers. They weigh them in their own scales, and measure them with their own rules. On the whole, it is well. They have more to learn from Garibaldi, than Garibaldi from them—and they will accept the teaching in the long run. Have we not lived through a period when the present premier of England was known as "Cupid," and the mere mention of his name provoked a smile or a sneer? Now, the reason why this mention has been made of Garibaldi is, that although very wise people tell us that the day of hero-worship is gone by for ever, it would appear that just now the whole action of Europe turns upon the decisions of half-a-dozen men, and Garibaldi is one of them. Indeed, until he had announced his

the Two Sicilies at once to Victor Emmanuel he may be said to have been the foremost amongst these marking men. What has he been about last week? To relate what these half-dozen men have been doing for the last seven days, would be the shortest method of giving a true chronicle of the week.

Just now Garibaldi has taken Capua. In Southern Italy his task is well-nigh completed. It is said that when this is fairly accomplished, he will return to his little island of Caserta, and put off dignity—at least as much of it as beadies would care about—more easily than he put it on. There are not wanting rumours that when the Italian matter is finished, he meditates an expedition into Hungary. The notice of this movement, indicated to the troops under General Turr's orders, seems ominous enough—and yet one should guess, that if the disaffection amongst the Hungarian soldiers in the Austrian service be as profound as it is said to be, both the Hungarian and the Italian question will receive a more pacific solution. The theory of the financial men is, that Austria is at the present moment prepared to bargain away and sell Venetia for a suitable consideration. The Austrian authorities appear to be shooting the Hungarian gunners at Venice for spiking the guns which they should turn against Caesar's foes.

This preliminary matter of Garibaldi's once disposed of, Europe falls back into its normal state—which state now appears to be one of dependence upon the resolutions to be adopted by the French Emperor. Now, what is this man about?—he who wears the shoes of stillness, and who bears the sword of sharpness, like the hero of the Fairy Tale! To be sure, last week, he has been drafting a few more battalions to Rome, and has managed matters so effectually, that if it were thought desirable to dislodge them from that illustrious city of ruins and recollections, the task would not be a very easy one. This, however, has ostensibly been the smallest of what our French neighbours call the Imperial pre-occupations during the last week. Louis Napoleon, during that brief section of time, has had the good sense to close with Mr. Whitworth. He has put our own tardy government to shame, and secured for himself means of offence and defence superior to our own. Besides this, Louis Napoleon has thrown himself into the theory of the currency, and is about to appear before the eyes of Europe as the great Banker of the world. If the intelligence be true—and it appears to be true—and if the announcement is not a mere blind—a golden shield held before the breasts of his soldiers—it is well. Europe, just now, has more to gain from peace than from war.

But if Louis Napoleon takes to banking in good earnest, Lord Overstone had best look to himself. The pound sterling—that Fetish of the "well-regulated" English mind—is in imminent danger. Beware the Ides of March—or rather, the Second of December! Our ledgers are exposed to a *coup-d'état*. The financial may be more potent than the military arm after all; and the French Emperor, who seems to have given up the idea of

reach Capel Court by double entry after all. The workings of the company popularly known as the "*Credit Mobilier*," may give some clue to the fashion of the Imperial thought upon such subjects. CREDIT, if we mistake not, is to be the keystone of the system, without those precautionary reserves which the late Sir Robert Peel would have deemed indispensable for the success of his financial operations. This matter should be regarded seriously. The announcement of it is the most important event of LAST WEEK. Europe may have somewhat to dread from France gorged with prosperity—but still more from desperate and bankrupt France.

Pounds, shillings, and pence—or rather francs and centimes—spart, what has Louis Napoleon bean about for the last seven days? He has been endeavouring to restore harmony between himself and the Parisian workmen irritated with the high price of lodgings and the dearness of tobacco. He has been marking his definitive rupture with the *parti prêtre* which has served his turn, and may now be cast aside, or at least reduced to obedience. The fag-ends of cigars, and the broken fragments of pipes, which have been cast by the workmen on the path where he takes his usual walk, have produced more effect upon the mind of Louis Napoleon than the headless arrows of the Ultramontane clergy.

To the workmen the Emperor deigns to explain his tobacco policy, and there is little doubt that if the explanation does not suffice to conjure away the storm of cigar-ends and broken pipes, Louis Napoleon will give way. He is too wise a ruler to drive men desperate by putting out their pipes. Obstinate old George III. lost his North American provinces for a pound of tea; Louis Napoleon will not put his crown in danger for an ounce of tobacco. For the priests he has a different word. Cromwell could not have taken a higher tone with a High-Church bishop of his day than the French Emperor now does with his recalcitrant clergy. They must follow as he leads, or—! The English Protector gave the Irish malcontents in his time the choice between emigration to Connaught, or to a point which lay still further south—and this is much the tone adopted last week by Louis Napoleon with his protesting bishops. The day of genuflections and pilgrimages in company with the graceful Eugénie to the shrines of the Breton peasant is at an end. Louis Napoleon now leaves the Holy Father exposed to the full force of circumstances, and what he calls the inevitable *logio* of facts. Well, just now the "*inevitable logio*" means the occupation of the late Papal territory—save the patrimony of St. Peter—by the national troops. It means the presence of an overwhelming French force in Rome and the patrimony of St. Peter itself. It means a bankrupt exchequer, and the benefit of the act—or worse—for Pio Nono ere the coming winter is at an end.

So far of Joseph Garibaldi and Louis Napoleon: let us not lose sight of our own First Minister, and his doings, during the LAST WEEK. Lord Palmerston is as much the expression of the aspirations and wishes of English society, at the latter end of the nineteenth century, as Garibaldi is of struggling—and now well-nigh triumphant—Italy,

or Louis Napoleon of France, weary of revolutions and loving glory well, but money still more. Time was when these islands were ruled by the great revolution families or the Whig connection. Then George III. and the younger Pitt, with their batches of new peers, had it all their own way. Then the Radicals and Reformers practically ruled over us for a term of years, and great lords and great statesmen, and all who aimed at the peer's coronet, and the seals of office, were compelled to pay court to the populace. These were the palmy days for political adventurers. There has come, at last, a time when Englishmen are weary of these things, or, more properly speaking, are content with what has been gained, and do not care for revolution principles or quintessence of Whiggery, or great Tory Peers, or High Prerogative Attorney-Generals, or Demagogues, or the Five Points of the Charter. See, last session, what a failure resulted from the attempt to galvanise the dead movement of 1831-32 into fresh life. Times are changed. It is idle to look in July for last winter's snow, or to water apple-trees in December with hot water, after the fashion of Triptolemus Yellowly, in search of a second crop. Lord Palmerston is the man who has had the wisdom to discern how English society is to be ruled during the current decennial period.

In the absence of all strong political passions and feelings, the statesman who is a good-humoured embodiment of the public opinion of his country is our appropriate chief. When we are not running crazy about a war, or engaged in mad speculation, the characteristic of English society is common sense. Lord Palmerston is common sense personified. He knows how to deal with men, and therefore men like to deal with him. He is neither a fanatic nor a sceptic in religion; he will hold his own against the Court, when need is, and yet maintain the authority of the Crown; he is touchy, and perhaps a trifle too well inclined to parade the British Lion in his dealings with foreign powers—in our very hearts we are all inclined to give that noble animal an airing now and then. He is not too great an orator. In the year 1860 we would no more consent to be ruled by a great orator, than by an eminent tragedian. Although he every now and then falls into the mistake of treating a political adversary with something very much like contempt in the House of Commons,—as a set-off, when addressing himself to the country—he has all the exquisite tact of Scarlett when "going to a jury." Nobody knows better than Lord Palmerston the value of a sandwich composed of two commonplaces and a bad joke. This style of oratory is not great, but it suits us just now. Then there is the genial humour of the man when out of harness. Despite of his seventy and odd years—and what dull people call the cares of State—the English Premier is as ready for an afternoon's rabbit-shooting as a great schoolboy. With all this he is in very truth a statesman of great experience—of close discernment—of high administrative ability—and a lover of his country. Lord Palmerston's Yorkshire progress, with a cheerful word, and a cordial grasp of the hand for all who came across him, may fairly be reckoned amongst the events of LAST WEEK.

THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.



CHAPTER III.

WHEN a Frenchman's wife disappears (if the fact is likely to be known among his friends) he selects his seconds, and practises his thrust in tierce. When the same misfortune happens to an American, he fills his pockets with revolvers, and bides his time. When an Englishman is so unhappy as to find his castle left unto him desolate, he consults his solicitor.

Let it be distinctly understood at the outset of our narrative, that Arthur Lygon, shocked, staggering, bewildered, was loyal and true to the woman whom he loved. For not one moment did the husband of Laura admit to his heart a single thought that accused her honour and his own. The first idea that would occur to most men, surrounded by such circumstances as those described in our opening chapter, would be, not unnaturally, that conjugal relations between the wife and the husband were over for ever and ever. That first idea would have been the very last for Arthur Lygon, or, rather, it never arose to him at all. After a long and wearying night, during which every possibility that his brain could suggest as

the cause of the sorrow that had come upon him presented itself with sickening iteration, until the gradually deadening faculty refused to be driven along the dreary paths of conjecture, and the bright dawn found him pale, nervous, and agitated, Lygon's true heart was still brave and firm enough to resist, unconsciously, the entrance of any base thought. His wife had encountered some fearful misfortune, and to rescue her, and restore her to the home whence she had been lured, or forced, or driven by some agency which it was his to trace and punish—that was Arthur Lygon's business. And when, after that terrible night-watch, he stood at his opened window, and cooled his forehead in the soft air of the summer morning, he had no angry words to utter, no sighs for his own tribulation, no reproaches against an undeserved destiny to pour out, after the fashion of heroes who are suddenly grieved or wronged. His one thought was for the delivery of Laura from the unknown enemy. A most unpicturesque, ineffective hero, indeed, and one upon whom such a chance of melting pathos and of fiery declamation was wan-

tonly wasted, but you must take him as he is. The loss is mine. I mourn for the eloquence that he might have launched into the night, the vows which he might have called on the rising sun to attest and register. In lieu of such a record, I have to do the humblest duty, that of telling the exact truth. Miserable and disturbed, he waited for the day, and when the morning was somewhat advanced, he bathed, dressed, and left his room as calmly, to outward appearances, as he had done on the preceding day.

With prompt resolve that there should be no shadow of suspicion in his household, Mr. Lygon had, within an hour from receiving the mysterious message, gone down-stairs, and in the presence of the children, but not addressing the falsehood to them—we are strange creatures—had informed a servant that a very dear friend of himself and of Mrs. Lygon lay at the point of death in Herefordshire, and that she had most properly hurried off in hope to be in time to see the departing lady. He managed, as if accidentally, to drop into the explanation a word or two implying that the dying friend was rich, thus certain to convey an impression which would be at once acceptable to domestics, for whom the information was intended. He trusted that in five minutes they would be cunningly nodding their heads in approval of their mistress's cleverness in looking after the interests of her family; and he was not deceived. He even went through the ceremony of the dinner, and his silence and thoughtfulness were easily accounted for by his servants. It had been cruel work, however, to contend against the chatter of the children.

"Has the lady ever been here, papa?" demanded Frederick. "Do we know her?"

"No, no, dear."

"Have I seen her?" asked Walter, who, as the eldest, deemed that his prolonged experience had probably embraced the acquaintance in question.

"No, Walter. But we'll not talk about it any more, dears. The loss of one whom we love is a very sad thing, and at present we do not know what it may please God should happen. So we will not speak any more about it until we hear from mamma."

And, as may easily be supposed, the few hours during which it was necessary to support appearances seemed anything but few or brief to Arthur Lygon; but they passed. His children's last kisses were warm upon his cheek when he once more locked himself into the room in which a happy father had, on three anxious, happy days, presented a newly-born child, for the kiss of a pale but smiling mother—of her who had left him, and all of them.

When Mr. Lygon, accompanied by little Clara, proud of being her father's companion, and almost prouder of being placed in charge of carpet-bag and cloaks, reached Liphthwaite, he drove straight to the house of Mr. Berry, but found that the latter had taken his pony and ridden across to the Abbey. Mrs. Berry had gone into the town, but the servant, who knew Mr. Lygon well, and was rapturous at the sight of the little girl of whom much had been heard, but who had never visited the place where her beautiful mother had been

married, was as ready with the hospitality of Cromwell Lodge as the owners could have been. Lunch was to be ready in ten minutes, and an early dinner should be got for Miss Clara, and, in the meantime, would she have some strawberries and cream after the journey?

"Thanks, Hester, thanks. But, no, we will not have anything at present. We'll leave our things, and take a walk. I want to show my little girl the Hill and the view, and when we come back, I dare say that your master or mistress will have returned."

Hester made another struggle to administer refreshment of some kind.

"Indeed she does not want anything," said Mr. Lygon. "It is but two hours since we breakfasted. Look here, Hester, I see the great telescope is still sticking out at the library window."

"Master is never tired of looking through that, sir, and finding out all that goes on up on the Hill."

"Well, if he comes in before we return, tell him to look there for us. Now, Clara, darling."

"But let me just cut a paper of sandwiches for Miss Clara," pleaded Hester. "The air up there gives people such an appetite, if we might guess, master says, by the awful great baskets they take up with 'em."

"We shall be all the readier for lunch, Hester, thank you," said Mr. Lygon, leading Clara away with him.

The child was delighted with the walk, with the little tree-bridge over the clear water, in which she actually saw a fish, and with the ascent of the height, and her merry chatter rattled out unceasingly. She was never much at a loss for talk, but the best orators are aided by accidents, and when Miss Clara's discourse was helped by such sparkling incidents as the scramble of a real squirrel up a tree close to her, by the vision of a little snake writhing across the path, and the meeting a boy with a hedgehog, which he presented to her in the kindest and uncontent manner, and which she carried a good way, to the extreme detriment of her prettily-fitting little green gloves (when releasing it being utterly out of the question with her, her father transferred it to his pocket), it may easily be imagined that her voice was very busy with the echoes of our hill.

"Oh! if mamma could only see this lovely place," she exclaimed, as they turned out of some shade, stood on the rocky edge, and saw the rich country below flooded with the sunshine of a summer noon.

"My child, she knows every bit of this hill, and all round it, as well as I do, and better."

And indeed it was true, for it was around, and about, and over the hill that Laura Vernon had guided Arthur Lygon in the happy days when he was persuading her to let him be her guide over the Hill of Difficulty called Life.

"Oh! I wish she was here."

"So do I, love," said Mr. Lygon, in a voice which he endeavoured, not very successfully, to make a cheerful one.

They followed to its end a path which was about two-thirds up the hill, and which, winding through a thick shade, terminated on an open, so

which the bright white light shone in all its power. Here Lygon stopped, pointed out to Clara a few of the points in the landscape, and then told her to wander about, if she liked, as he would lie down, and look at something he had to read.

"Don't go too far from me, and keep out of the sun, darling. Call out to me, if you miss your way."

"But you will take care of the poor little hedgehog, papa?"

"All care, dear."

And the happy child departed on her exploration, singing gaily, and with her head full of hedgehogs, squirrels, snakes, caves, and all the wonders of the new world into which she had been brought.

* * * * *

"Papa! papa!"

It was, however, only a cry of delight and excitement that roused him from his own thoughts. A few steps brought him where he could see her, above him.

And a prettier little fairy of the forest had not been seen on the old hill. In a setting of green leaves, her light dress stood out like some strange new flower, and as her dark hair fell over her shoulders—the hat on the ground was much too full of wild-flowers, coloured stones, and other treasures, to be at all available for its ordinary purpose—and stirred in the slight breezes, her bright face, flushed with heat and delight, quite glowed while she stood intently watching some object below. Even her father's troubled eye could not fail to note her rare beauty.

"I see the house, I see the telescope!" she cried, "and a gentleman at the door is waving a handkerchief at me."

And she waved her own in return, with infinite energy, and her eyes sparkled as she perceived that her fairy signal was recognised.

They returned to the lodge, and found not only Mr. Berry but his wife, and were heartily welcomed by the former, and were received with all proper and decorous attention by the latter.

"But how shabby to come without Laura," said Mr. Berry. "Clara, how could you let papa leave mamma behind?"

"But mamma has gone into the country herself, so we couldn't bring her," explained Clara.

Foreseeing the question, Mr. Lygon had prepared himself with the reply. Mr. and Mrs. Berry had known his wife from girlhood, and the half explanation which Lygon had made at home would, he felt, be hardly sufficient for the Berrys, who were tolerably well acquainted with the names, at least, of all her intimate friends. He had come down to give his full confidence to Mr. Berry, but had not the slightest intention of entrusting it to the solicitor's wife, whom indeed he loved not.

"Yes," said Mr. Lygon, promptly—perhaps a little more promptly than would have been quite natural had there been no secret to keep. "Poor Mrs. Cateaton—did you not meet her at our house, Mrs. Berry, when you came to town the year before last—"

Mrs. Berry, looking him very straight in the face with her cold, light, but not very clear eyes.

Mrs. Berry was some ten or twelve years younger than her husband. In earlier life she had seemed passably pretty, when seen in a group of young girls, a sort of partnership which, to a careless eye, invests all the members of the firm with shares in the personal advantages of each. But when an observer, drawing back from the party, calmly and silently limited the partnership, and assigned to each young lady her own portion of the united assets, he did not make much of the contributions of Marion Wagstaffe. Against a pleasant though cold smile, a clear blonde complexion, rather a good figure, white, but not small hands, a readiness of speech, some neatness in language, and perfect self-composure, which one might transfer to the wrong side of the account by calling it self-complacency, the accountant had to set the light eyes that have been mentioned, and to add that they were objectionably watchful, and never in repose. He had also to note that the voice which proceeded from those unsympathetic-looking lips was, though clear, liable to become too high for a sensitive ear, and though this would have been of no consequence, had the habitual utterances been kindly, he would have remarked that Miss Wagstaffe's *forte* was in retort, and that even in the lightest conversation her share was usually the detection of a friend's ignorance, or the correction of a friend's English. Marion was tall, and height is a merit in its way; but not especially so when one avails oneself of it as a tower of espial, and rejoices in the ability to look down with undue ease upon the misdoings of a shorter world;—and so did Marion Wagstaffe use those extra inches. Certainly she was not an amiable girl, but, dressing well, smiling readily, and keeping her light braided hair very neat, she somehow took her place among amiable girls, and used to be invited a good deal by people who would scarcely have cared to say that they liked her. She could not sing, but had grappled determinately with the keyboard, and what mechanical labour can attain there, Marion had seized, and marked the time with commendable precision when she played quadrilles—everybody has some virtue.

This was the account as it would have been made up, errors excepted, when she was two-and-twenty. In completing it, to be rendered at the date of our story, the age had to be doubled, and important additions had to be made. Among them was her having become possessed of about four hundred a year in her own right (by the bequest of a distant relative, who was most anxious to leave her property not only away from her near relations, but in a quarter whence it was morally certain that no weakness would send back a shilling to the baffled expectants), and her having secured the hand of the prosperous solicitor of Liptwaite. How Edward Allingham Berry was induced to marry a woman who was certainly about as unlike himself in character as possible, it is not for me to try to explain. He was rich, and therefore the addition of riches might have been an aid in bringing about the union. But he was a thoughtful man, and could scarcely have admired

not but dislike her incessant antagonism; a sincere man (attorneyism deducted), and must have been annoyed by her mysteries and reticence. However, they married, and it is just to say that the unamiable woman became a most foolishly indulgent and devoted mother, and that the blow which took her children from her was more terribly felt than the world believed that Marion Berry could feel. Nevertheless, it did not soften her, though it went well nigh to crush her. The cold smile was almost as ready on the thin lips as of old. Such was the person who was looking at Mr. Lygon, and waiting further explanation of Mrs. Lygon's absence from London.

"Why, papa," broke in Clara, "you told Walter that the lady had never been at our house."

"No, no, dear," said Mr. Lygon, calmly. "I told him that he did not know her. But I thought, Mrs. Berry, that you had met Mrs. Cateaton. What put that into my head? However, she is exceedingly—dangerously—ill, and she telegraphed for Laura to go down and see her."

"What part of the country?"

"Herefordshire."

"My aunt Empson comes from Herefordshire. She will be here in the course of the afternoon, and perhaps knows the lady. What—"

"Ah!" said Lygon, quickly, for he wanted, of course, to ask a question just here instead of answering one. "What part of the country does your aunt come from?"

Did he expect to win the trick? Mrs. Berry suspected nothing, but habit induced her always to take every conversational advantage.

"Why," she said, "—um—dear me—tut—tut—I hope that I am not losing my memory as well as my eyesight—what is the place called? I shall be able to tell you in a minute. What is the name of Mrs. Cateaton's place—that may bring it to me?"

"Long Edgecombe," said Mr. Lygon, who thought an invented name was safer than a real one.

"I don't remember that name; but we'll look at the map presently, and that will remind me of aunt's place."

"Meantime we'll have some lunch," said Mr. Berry. "You can't think how glad I am to see you, Arthur. And one word's as good as a hundred—we're not going to have a fly-a-way visit from you this time, especially as you have brought Miss to see her mamma's country. To-day we'll have a chat and a ramble, but to-morrow we'll give her a long drive, perhaps to Bingley, and Saturday we'll talk about by and by. Lord Annonbury's grounds are open on Saturdays, but I'm afraid not the house, and that's the best part of the sight—but I'll ascertain."

And over these and other of the kindly schemings of a host who is delighted to see his guests, Mr. Berry talked during the lunch.

"Do you like leaving your house to the care of servants only?" said Mrs. Berry. She did not mean to be inhospitable, but it was in her nature to take the least pleasant view of everything.

"One would rather not, of course," replied Mr.

Lygon. "But Price is quite a person to trust at need."

"But there was no need for you to leave until Mrs. Lygon came back."

"Civil speech, my dear," said Mr. Berry, "considering that Arthur left town to come to us."

"I don't imagine that Mr. Lygon suspects me of intending to be uncivil, Edward," said Mrs. Berry, putting on the grievance-look which some women assume with such promptness. "I suppose that he would have too much self-respect to visit where the lady of the house was capable of anything of the kind."

"Well, take some wine with him, then," said Mr. Berry, laughing, "and show him that you are very glad to see him."

"I am taking bitter ale, as you know I always do in the morning, Mr. Berry, but Mr. Lygon wants no assurance that he is welcome."

"Then he shall take wine with me," said Mr. Berry. "Your health, Arthur, and the misers's, and yours, Miss Clara, and may you make as pretty and good a woman as mamma."

"As good and as pretty, I should have said," observed Mrs. Berry, "if it had been necessary to say anything about prettiness at all. May you be a good girl, Clara, as far as any of us can be said to be good, and never mind about the looks."

And Mrs. Berry sipped at her bitter mixture. Those may call it ale who have no national feelings, no love of national traditions, and no sense of the responsibilities of language, but there is one pen that shall never so disgrace its Mother Goose.

"Never mind about the looks!" repeated Mr. Berry, cheerily. "But I do mind about the looks, and I mind about them a great deal. I hate ugly people, and I always used to like them to be on the other side of a case in which I was engaged. One made out one's coats with such gusto when one thought what a hideous face the enemy would twist over a good bouncing item."

"Mr. Lygon knows best," said Mrs. Berry; "but if I had a child of that age in the room I should desire her to go and walk in the garden rather than hear such teaching."

Clara's eyes turned to her father's, and they exchanged that look of love and confidence, that all but suppressed smile, which mean perfect mutual understanding, and leave little need for words.

"Not a bad action, though," said Mr. Berry. "as we seem to have done lunch. Let us all go and look at the garden. Take another glass of the Madeira, first, Arthur. You may trust it."

It might not appear to an ordinary observer to be of much consequence whether Mrs. Berry became freckled or not, but as that person herself entertained a different opinion, and saw fit to go away and provide herself with a brown hat and a blue sun-shade, she afforded Arthur Lygon an opportunity of saying a word or two, in an undertone, to Mr. Berry.

"Of course," replied his friend.

"It is very rude to whisper in company, papa," said Clara, laughing saucily.

"So it is," said Mrs. Berry, re-entering, duly

protected against the sun. "I am glad the little girls are taught good manners in these days."

They went out into the garden, and Mr. Berry, in directing Clara to the path that led to the strawberry-beds, performed a clever manœuvre, for the child went skimming away like a glad bird to the place he pointed out, and Mrs. Berry, in accordance with her nature, immediately followed the child to prevent her unrestrained enjoyment. Yet Mrs. Berry had been a mother, and, as has been said, a doting one.

"I am here to consult you," said Arthur Lygon, hurriedly, the moment her sharp ears were out of range, "upon a sad affair. How can we speak without interruption?"

"Easily. But a word. Not an affair of your own?"

"Indeed, yes."

The elder man touched his friend's hand for a second only.

"You want to telegraph to town," he said.

"I'll drive you over to Marfield, as it is just as well that our Liphthwaite gossips—you understand."

They walked to the strawberries, at which Clara had made her first dash with all the delight of a child who had never seen such things, except in dishes, and to whom, therefore, the red fruit, lurking under the leaves, seemed downright treasures—jewels.

"Come off the mould, dear," Mrs. Berry was crying to her, "and come off at once, or you will stain your frock."

"Let her stain it," said Mr. Berry, deprecatingly.

"That Mrs. Lygon may infer, even if she should not say, that I am incompetent to take the charge of a child for a single day. I am obliged to you, Mr. Berry."

"Mrs. Lygon has not to form her opinion of you after all these years, my dear."

"If she happen to have formed a good one, I prefer that she should retain it, Mr. Berry."

"All right, my dear. But look here. Which of the horses had I better have put to the chaise? For here is Lygon, like all the Londoners I ever knew, no sooner gets out of town than he wants to be sending a message back, and so I must drive him to Marfield. There's a telegraph station there."

"But why not telegraph from Liphthwaite?" replied Mr. Berry.

"Why," replied Mr. Berry, artfully, "you put me on my guard there, with what you said about Thomas Letts being fool enough to let his young wife come into the office and learn things, and how that business of Wendale's got wind. A message to Somerset House may not exactly concern little Mrs. Letts."

"I am glad that a hint I take the liberty of giving may, sometimes, be worth attention," said Mrs. Berry, immediately dispatching a gardener to order the chaise.

"I would go with you," said she, "only aunt is coming over."

Arthur Lygon felt more kindly towards that relative than he had done when her name was first mentioned. He hoped to see the lady on his return. Clara would stay, and say so.

Clara did not look exactly delighted at the idea of being left with Mrs. Berry, but was much too good a child to show discontent. In a few minutes more the gentlemen had driven off.

"That's not the way to Marfield," said Mrs. Berry, watching the chaise as it turned to the right, at the cross road, instead of keeping on straight, up Bolk's Hill. That was an oversight of Mr. Berry's, who was so anxious to hear what Arthur had to say, that he hurried on to Rincley Common, the place he had mentally decided on for their conversation.

They were speedily at the Common, a wide, wild-looking, high-lying expanse, studded with gorse patches; and here Mr. Berry pulled up.

"We could as easily have shut ourselves up in the library, you know, but then it would have been known that we had been shut up for a talk," he said.

They left the chaise, and the horse, accustomed to such intervals of work, set himself quietly to graze.

"Now, my dear Arthur, what is it?"

CHAP. IV.

MUCH as Arthur Lygon had to tell, it needed but few words to tell it, and it was told.

Mr. Berry looked at him earnestly, sorrowfully, for a few moments.

"You have told me all?" he asked.

"All," replied Lygon.

"And why have you told it me?"

"Why?" returned Arthur. "Are you surprised that in such a sorrow I should come to consult the oldest and the best friend I have in the world?"

"No," said Berry, "I am not surprised, and if the word were not out of place on such an occasion, I would say that I am gratified. At all events you do what is both natural and wise. Of course I accept your confidence, and of course I will do my best for you. But now go on."

"I do not understand. I have given you every detail."

"Of Laura's flight, yes. But come, be a man. You must speak out, if any good is to be done."

"But I have no more to say," said Lygon, surprised, and a little impatiently. "I repeat that I don't understand you. Ask me any question."

"That is just what I am doing, but you evade my question."

"I evade a question! Put it again."

"Why did Mrs. Lygon leave your home?"

"My God," said Arthur, "is not that the mystery which you must help me to solve?"

"I repeat, be a man, Arthur. Come."

"I swear," said Lygon, "that your meaning is a mystery to me."

"Arthur," said Mr. Berry, "it is not kind of you to force me to use words that even hint at shame. But if you will have it so, tell me. Do you believe that Mrs. Lygon left your house with a lover, or to join one?"

The young husband turned a ghastly white, and he felt his limbs tremble under him at the presence of the foul phantom which those words had called up. But he confronted the phantom only

to denounce it as a lie, and to trample through it on the instant. Another moment, and his eyes flashed with an honest anger, and the paleness had utterly disappeared, face and brow speaking as plainly as the eyes.

"I am answered," said Mr. Berry.

"Take an answer in words, though," said Arthur Lygon, in a hoarse voice. "If—" His friend interrupted him.

"Let no idle words pass between us," said Mr. Berry, gravely. "We have bitterness enough to deal with. You would say that the idea I ventured to raise came before you for the first time, and is so false, so abhorrent to your nature, that nothing but your feeling that I did not speak in levity, but as an old man who would serve a young friend, prevented your striking me down upon this grass."

"Something of that," said Arthur, recovering himself. "Not the violent thought you would suggest—but—well, Berry, it is a wickedness to have spoken the words of her—in connection with her name."

"It is," said Mr. Berry, "and I feel it as deeply as you can do. But you forced me to put that wicked question by evading a more harmless one. You will not continue to do so."

"Berry, you speak as if you thought I were keeping back something which I ought to say."

"So you are."

"Ask for it, and hear it."

"If I put it again, it will be in words that may offend you."

"Nothing that does not affect her can offend me—nothing from you can or shall." And he held out his hand.

"A good woman," said Mr. Berry, retaining his hold on Lygon's hand, "does not leave her husband's home for any fault of her own. In that case, if she leaves it, the fault must be his."

Arthur Lygon looked the other full and fairly in the face.

"I answer your look," said Mr. Berry. "I have seen a good deal of the world—both sides of it—and knowing how lightly people can absolve themselves from offences of their own, you will pardon me if I push my question. You have done nothing to drive Laura from her home?"

"I?" repeated Arthur. "I, who love her better than my life, and only ask to spend my life in making hers happy! I drive her away! Are you mad?"

"I believe all you say," said the old lawyer. "But you need not be told that women have strange ideas, and that matters which we pass over as trifles sometimes determine their whole lives. You have nearly satisfied me, and yet I should like you to tell me, in plain English, one thing."

"I beg of you—ask it."

"You are a handsome man—you were a favourite with women—I do not believe that you would deliberately do wrong; but has anything survived from the old days, or is there any momentary folly that can have reached Laura's ears?"

"On my honour,—no. On my honour,—no. And if it sounds foolishly when I say that not only do I love her heartily and thoroughly, but that she seems to me so incalculably superior, both in mind and body, to anything I have seen since my marriage, I can't help that. I swear to you that you have got the truth."

"And I am right glad to get it. That is enough, my dear Arthur. And now the ground is clear, in one sense, though the making it so increases our difficulties ten-fold. Husband and wife being alike without fault as regards one another, and yet being separated, we approach a mystery. I suppose we shall break into it, but we must see."

"Remember, I have nothing else in life to live for," said Arthur, passionately.

"Yes, you have, Arthur, much. Even if the mystery should baffle you to your dying hour, you have that child beyond the hill, and two other children in London to live for, besides your duty."

"A cold word, that," said Arthur, "and you must believe it very potent with me, when you, just now, imputed to me that I could be false to the best woman in the whole world for the sake of some wretched intrigue. But we will not talk of that now. Answer me, Berry, for my head has been in one whirl, and only the necessity of hypocrisy has kept me straight—answer me, what is the first thing that occurs to you as the key to this accursed mystery?"

"You must give me time."

"No, but your first thought? Don't refuse. If you could know what kind of night I have spent, madly plunging my hand into darkness, as it were, to try to grapple with a belief, with an idea, you would not refuse it."

"I have not a definite answer to make. I could, perhaps, say something; but it would, in all probability, be wrong, and to lead you astray at such a moment, would be a sin. Yet—stay. I might be raising another horror, in simply telling you to dispel one idea which perhaps has not come across you. Tell me, Arthur—and do not think me fencing with your question—have you, yourself, settled, or tried to settle, upon any conviction?"

Arthur Lygon again turned pale.

"One thought," he said, in a low voice. "came whispering near me in the darkness, and would not be driven away. It is not my thought, but it would come, and return, though I cursed it off. Mind, and for God's sake remember, the thought is NOT mine, nor is there the slightest foundation for it in this world. I scarcely dare repeat it."

Mr. Berry gazed earnestly into the pale agitated face, and in answer to his reiterated demand he saw the lips of Arthur Lygon form themselves for the utterance of one expected word.

"Do not say it," said Berry.

"It has crossed your mind, too, then," said Arthur, his face becoming still ghastlier.

"No."

"Ah!" said Lygon, the tears almost their way to his eyes, "then you have a solution."

"Do not press me, that is a kind fellow."

I shall tell you that I am ready to speak. At present, and suddenly collecting all the reminiscences I can, and without time to marshal them, or to weigh their value, I think I may say—and I am really striving to use words that shall be as indefinite as I can make them—I think I may say that there are conjectures which we are bound to exhaust before we dare—

"Stop," said Arthur Lygon, "you have used a word which you would not use lightly—reminiscences. Are they connected with my life or hers? You can answer that without consideration."

"Yours," said Mr. Berry, quickly.
It was an untruth. The word on which Lygon had fixed, his friend had used unadvisedly. And before the last question was put, such thoughts came, darkening, around the memories which Berry spoke of, that he feared, without more cautious preparation, to let Lygon enter the circle. He judged it safer to exclude him by that single word of reply, which, however, should have been

"Hers."

"Mine?" said Lygon. "The weight that you would take from my mind, if you could show that anything in my life had been the spring of this. I should enter so cheerfully, or at least so courageously, upon the quest which we have now to begin."

"In defiance of those words of warning in the *parting note*?"

"They are not her words. And if they were, they must have been forced from her by some strange and damnable cheat. While I speak—a light! Has some one lied to her in the spirit of what you were imputing just now?"

"Would Laura endure any charge against her husband—at least without laying her hand in his, and asking whether he dared retain it."

"You are right, and my thought wrongs her," said Arthur, slowly.

His lingering utterance did not escape the notice of his friend, who, however, made no remark upon it, then.

"You must give me time, I repeat," said Mr. Berry. "A day is not now of consequence, as you allowed the first hours to pass without taking any active steps."

"Would you have had me treat her as a criminal," asked Arthur, "have had her described to the police, and notice given to stop her at the sea-ports, and on the railways?"

"You have not done it," said Mr. Berry, "and as it is now too late, we need not consider what a husband might have been justified in doing. Such steps as you have taken seem very prudent, as there is nothing for any one to say against Mrs. Lygon, did she return to-morrow."

"If she return to-morrow ten years, no one shall say a word against her," said Arthur.

"I am a hard old lawyer," said Berry, touched; "but I think I believe that love like that felt by you is too true to be ultimately unrewarded. I believe that you will be delivered out of misery."

"I pray that I may," said Lygon, "for it is a misery hard to be borne."

THE MONTHS.

NOVEMBER.

ONE of the grand distinctions between townspeople and country-people is that townsfolk have a positive dislike of certain seasons of the year, while rural folk never dream of such a thing. The familiar abuse of the month of November comes from Londoners mainly; and, for the rest, it may be traced to dwellers in streets. They have not opportunity in the short days to get into the country, and see what the woods are like, or even the highways, during the month which connects autumn and winter. People who ride, and have spirit enough to leave the sloppy streets, and go forth from under the low-hanging fog and smoke which hide the top of the church-spire, will always bear testimony to the rewards which the courageous walker gathers from rural objects in November as in every other month. Squires, farmers, and labourers, ought to know most of the inconveniences and irksomeness of bad weather and short days; yet it does not occur to them to hate the month on account of these things; it has its own advantages and pleasures, and for these the country population is not ungrateful.

We have got rid of the old prejudices about November being favourable to suicide. Our modern registration has proved to us that that imputation is false; the number of suicides in November being less than in almost any month of the year. When the notion grew up, men were not such good physiologists as they are now. They were not aware that suicide does not ensue from low spirits alone, but from a state of brain which may occasion low spirits, but is quite distinct from them. There are seasons of the year which, by affecting the circulation, and consequently the digestive and nervous systems, provoke to suicide much more than gloomy weather and short days can do. There is less self-murder in this month than in some of the brightest of the year.

The gloom in London is certainly both inconvenient and dispiriting. I do not remember that I cared much about it when I lived there: but now, when on occasion I alight from the train on a November morning, and find the railway officials attended everywhere by a cloud of their own breath, and poking about with a lantern, or appearing and disappearing in a yellow fog, I do wonder how half a million of families in London streets can keep up their cheerfulness. In the shops, indeed, the people behind the counter are smiling, as usual, amidst the gaslights which are burning on till noon. The most anxious persons visible are perhaps the cab and omnibus drivers, who have, in addition to the regular care of driving, to peer forward into the fog, in blind apprehension of what may be coming. There is something dismal in reading or working by lamplight at home at midday, or in poring over one's book at the window to avoid the necessity. If the fog should at length suddenly clear off, and show the parks overhung by the pale blue sky of autumn, and their almost leafless trees touched by the level rays of the setting sun, the Londoner may form some idea of what November is in the country.

We have mists in the mornings, of course; and the mists come in from their early morning walks

exhilarated by the exercise, but without having seen anything beyond the width of the road, or the height of their own heads. While we are at breakfast, we see the fog becoming whiter and thinner, till it breaks into portions, and begins to open and rise. Here we see the profile of a tree, and there a whole shrub with some marigold or lingering dahlia beside it. Then a pencil of yellow rays makes an emerald path across the grass, and lights up the ivy on the toolhouse wall. Then the clearance goes on rapidly, and the last

wreaths are wafted away, to shine like white fleeces in the pale blue sky.

On such days we make sure of our ramble early. We know the value of the first half of the month by our almost invariable experience of the change in the middle of it. We reckon on nothing in the way of weather after Martinmas (the 11th), and we seldom pass the 15th without losing the sunshine.

As for what we see, it is a sort of ripening and extension of what we saw in October. The



thrushes and greenfinches are busy among the hips and haws; but the birds' nests are becoming visible in every hedge, as the winds carry off the last yellow leaves. There, where the little blue or white or brown eggs were so snugly hidden in the foliage, and the henbird sat so close and still, the nest is now exposed to all eyes—perhaps hanging in shreds from the thorns, and deserted. Now and then, if there is a prodigious bustle among the birds at their meal, or an agitation among the fieldfares that have settled down on

the fallow beyond, we know what to look for; and there, wheeling or swooping, is the hawk—hungry, and bold accordingly. The small creatures are almost all gone into winter quarters. The fieldmice are snug at home in their larders. We have too much reason to know where the rats are. The squirrels are less and less seen, except in the warmest noon hour. The frogs have gone to bed for the winter in the mud at the bottom of the ponds, and the badger in some hole in the bank, and the hedgehog in some dry hollow.

This absence of so many old acquaintance reminds us that we shall see the bat no more this year. It is hanging head downwards from the rafter of some barn or belfry, wrapped in its skinny wing. The snails and slugs have burrowed underground, and there are only two or three moths remaining. The moles are digging nests as fast as their clumsy ways permit. We begin to make much of the robin as he perches on the garden paling of every cottage we pass. He is still somewhat shy; but, before a month is over, he will be at our window, in a very confiding mood.

Some remnants of beauty hang round these cottages still. The *Pyracantha* makes a bright display of red berries beside the windows; and in the warmest corner, between the porch and the wall, one is sure to see either the last dahlia of the year, or a tall hollyhock. The China rose will show blooms till the snow comes, or after, for we have often seen a bud or bloom drooping under its burden of snow, and even (as I remember happened once) frozen into a glass dish in the drawing-room, and looking in no way the worse for its cold captivity. There is one sunny cottage where we look for trails of the *Tropæolum canariense*, on the front of the porch, among the ivy, long after it has gone to tatters elsewhere. The greatest profusion I have seen of that beautiful climber was on a porch near Bolton Abbey; and the latest is within a walk of my own house. These precious last flowers of the season endure into November, in sheltered nooks, even when frosts have blackened whole regiments of dahlias by the middle of September in exposed situations, in the same way that a tree may offer a theme to a moralising Lake poet, weeks after townsfolk suppose it a settled matter that every leaf in England that can fall has fallen. The late tourist who thinks October, and on into November, the best time for the dales, knows what it is to come upon one of those nooks in Borrowdale, or on the side of Scawfell, in which the wind seems never to stir, and where the birch or the ash or sycamore retains its leaves till something happens to push them off. The voices and the tread of travellers may do it; so the artist begs them to pass on quietly, and leave him to sketch the form and seize the colouring, and put the remarkable date below.

My girls have not admitted that the sketching season is over. They want to study the ramifications of the wood, knowing that without this they can no more draw trees than the figure-painter can draw his personages without having studied the anatomy of the human frame. One object in our noon walks, therefore, is to find the best hedge-row timber, and the finest single trees and groups that the woods afford. There are snug lanes and warm woodpaths where one may sit still for half an hour with impunity. Yet, how the shelter of the woods is gone! And with it, how much of their motion! And how the sound is changed! When the trees were in full leaf, opposing large masses to the winds, and swaying before the pressure with a sweeping roar, the hoarse tumult was wholly unlike the vibrating rise and fall of sound occasioned by the passage of the winds through unbending trees. It takes a much stronger gust

to shake the forest trees now than in midsummer; and the music is less like the sweeping waves upon a shingly beach than the sea-organ which thrills one's heartstrings when a squall overtakes a tight-rigged ship in the Atlantic. Pinewoods alone are constant to their winter music throughout the year. Every breeze that touches them strongly enough in any season awakens up millions of fairy harps, which, united, set the air trembling with the most moving harmony that Nature affords. Except in the north of Scotland, there is scarcely enough of pine forest for us to understand what this music may amount to; but travellers in the Carolinas or in Canada, or in Norway, or in the Baltic provinces of Russia, will bear out all that poets can say of the harp music of Nature's orchestra.

While one daughter makes a study of a bare ash (for the oak she must wait till the spring buds push off the crisp russet leaves), the other dashes down upon paper the colouring of an ivy-clad trunk of an elm. It is, to be sure, a wonderful picture—the vivid green of the ivy leaf seen from behind, and the glitter of its front surface; the various browns of the stem; the russet fern growing out of the emerald moss in the fork; the grey tufts of withered weeds, and the red and yellow ground—these make a gay picture of gloomy November. The yew is another capital subject; but it is one of the commonest—its berries in relief against the dark foliage tempting the brush of the young artist as irresistibly as the beaks of hungry birds.

The most picturesque figure we meet in these rambles is, beyond all question, the ratcatcher. Jane has never quite got over the start given her by one of the brotherhood one afternoon, when, in the remotest part of a green lane, she was sitting wholly engrossed with her sketch. A heavy finger on her arm made her look up; and there stood the tall, brawny old fellow, looking down upon her with an exceedingly disagreeable grin. He had come up so softly on the grass, and had kept his dog so quiet, that he was like an apparition. She hoped he would pass on: but he had evidently no such intention. He pulled out of a dozen pockets as many rats, bloody about the muzzles, and opened out his store of gossip of the neighbourhood, laying his finger on her arm at every emphatic point. Her pencils were soon put by, and she was on her way to the nearest end of the lane, her new friend turning back with her, as if for the pleasure of conversation. She walked as fast as her beating heart would allow, while he, with his swinging stride, was perpetually on the point of getting before her. How she wished he would go forward! But he wanted to learn from her who lived here or there, and whether there were only ladies in yonder house, and whether the gentlemen in another were travelling or at home. I suspect he was amusing himself with the supposed fears of a young lady living in a lone house; for she evaded all his attempts to learn where she lived. She made a call in the village to escape him; but, just as she was turning in at the home gate in the dusk, her picturesque friend appeared at her elbow—wallet, dog, broad-brimmed, crooked hat and all, with rats on his arm and a straw in

his month. He sent by her his compliments to me, and he would call to-morrow to see if I wanted his skill. He did call, and we had the strange scene of the driving of the rats from out of stack and barn; and also, I believe, the ordinary conclusion—of a sly reinstatement of a pair or two, to make work for a future occasion.

This is the worst season of the year for the nerves of timorous people living in the country. The refuse of the hop-picking class, and of the imported reapers, the intemperate and unthrifty, desperate at meeting winter without resources, are dangerous, if at all, in these dark long nights, when fog shroud evil-doers. It was in this month that a tenant of mine, living in the midst of his fields, far away from any acquaintance that he could depend upon, entertained a very remarkable guest for an hour one night. His wife is subject to embarrassing visits from sturdy beggars when he is known to be absent; and, as he has had experience enough of vagrants, sleeping in his hay or among his pigs, to have formed habits of great caution, he looks well to the bolts of his hay-house window, not relishing the idea of finding the ashes of a pipe, and the marks of men's figures on the hay in the morning; and he admits no strangers at night, except to an outhouse which contains nothing combustible but straw to lie on. One evening, a woman uncommonly tall, with a baby under her cloak, begged for shelter,—mere shelter, as she had bread with her. She was shown the outhouse, and professed herself grateful. When the farmer and his wife were moving to go up to bed, and the one servant was already asleep in her closet which opened upon the kitchen, the woman knocked. She wanted nothing that would give any trouble; merely to be allowed to lie down before the fire till the morning, when she would be off at daybreak. The farmer did not much like it, nor did his wife; but the flood of a mother's eloquence about her baby's need of warmth overwhelmed them. They let her come in, and make herself a bed of the matting on the floor. An hour after, the servant was awakened by a slight sound, and saw, through the crevice of her door, the tall woman get up, throw her baby down on the brick-floor with astounding violence, strip off cloak and petticoat, and appear as an armed man. He never once looked towards the closet, having no idea of any one being there, but softly drew back the bolts of the door, stepped out, and began a low whistle. Quick as thought the girl was after him, shut and bolted the door; and alarmed her master. It would have been too rash to follow the guest: so there was a popping of guns from the windows, and a lighting up of the house. The cloak was kept with care, as possible evidence. The baby was a hunch of straw.

Far worse than the burglary which is the dread of lone households, is the incendiarism which has sprung up in modern times. Rick-burning was scarcely heard of in the old days of tinder-box and dark lantern. It became a fashionable crime thirty years ago: and we have never since felt so safe as we were before. I well remember the November in which the practice had become a nightly one in the agricultural counties. I was

an active and zealous lad at that time, delighted to carry out my father's pleasure as a magistrate, and never tired of cauntering about the district, with watch and ward, hints to the magistrates, and news of suspicious appearances. Nothing could induce me to go to bed till I had accompanied my father and the servants through our own and neighbouring stackyards, searching for skulls, wires, vitriol, lucifers, phosphorus, and all abnormal appearances. I was up and looking out, several times in the night: and I once saw the actual kindling of the fire, not many yards off. It was about one in the morning. I had looked and listened for some time, and was just about to turn from the window when I observed a tiny blue spark,—I could not tell exactly where: for it was pitch dark everywhere else. In a moment, before I could think or move, the blue flame ran along the ridge of a stack, and spread over it; and then burst out into a yellow blaze. We were on the spot in the shortest possible time. I stumbled over a wire: but we found nobody, and could make no impression on the fire. The insurance offices have never liked farmers' custom since, high as were the terms offered for the insurance of farm products and stock; and tramps have sunk lower than ever in rural opinion.

Nobody can wonder at this who considers what the diffusion of lucifer matches now is, and how impossible it is to teach caution to ignorant and barbaric people. How many villages are there in which lucifers are kept out of the reach of children? We read occasionally of infants dying from sucking lucifers. Arrived at the next stage, that of delight at making a flame, children will put forth all their little cunning and strength to get hold of a box of matches. This way happened the great Woodford fire, in August of last year, which destroyed food to the amount of many thousand pounds—dairy-houses and stables, stores of agricultural implements, coach houses, farm-house, and a row of cottages. This way happened the great Willingham fire, in September of last year, when a hamlet of cottages, a farm and its produce, and property worth 10,000*l.* were destroyed by the folly of a child, who struck a lucifer-match for sport, and threw it down among the straw of a stackyard. Thus happen the fires which follow the movements of tramps, who are like the children for recklessness. They lie down on straw to smoke themselves to sleep, and drop the pipe when they begin to snore. Having crept into the hay for the night, they indulge in a pipe at day-break, and start without looking whether they have dropped any hot ashes. If I admitted November to be a gloomy month, it would be on the ground of rural incendiarism, more than any other. In truth, I have seen too much of it; and I doubt whether all the efforts of my family and neighbours are of much avail in lessening the danger. We set an example of dispersing our produce over our land, instead of collecting it into yards where every stack almost touches its neighbour; and of keeping a good supply of water, and wet mortar always accessible; and of taking the same care of lucifer matches that we should of poison; and of inspiring children with a wholesome awe of striking fire. Still, we often

see a baby clutching at the matches which boys of five or seven are flourishing about, without regard to time or place. With fire insurance offices losing their profits by the act of one five-year-old child, one would think the case pretty clear and strong; yet there is no village which has not a soft, slatternly mother, or a reckless father, who will leave everything to the chance of their children doing no mischief.

While this danger has increased, another has died out. There will hardly be any more fires from the old Powder-plot. It was a serious grievance,—that 5th of November celebration,—in all the country towns and villages, up to a few years ago. The farmer had perhaps no greater trial of temper throughout the year; and the shop-keeper and country-gentleman required all their amiability to get through the first week in November. I am speaking of the Protestant citizens. As for the Catholics, they must have been taught to bear it. Every dry branch that could be abstracted from any tree; every gate that could be got off its hinges; hurdles from the fold, benches from the park; any stray stool, or shutter, or crate, or half-door from a shop; hen-coops, knife-boards, pails, washing-tubs,—whatever could be got hold of that would burn, was sure to disappear, and be no more seen till it was detected flaming away in the middle of the bonfire.

The Protestant washerwoman and grocer and farmer, were to be pitted; but how can the wrongs of the Catholic squire and his schoolmaster, and agents, be described! They were despoiled of their property, which was burned before their faces in insult to their religion. Their neighbours took this to heart some time before the celebration was generally discountenanced; and we, for our part, abolished Guy and all his works several years since. As the rustics and the children did not know what they meant by their Guy, there was no making them understand why he should come to an end to their detriment; and to secure the neighbourhood against discontent, and against "bone fires" on the sly, we turned the 5th of November into a Thanksgiving Day, something like that of New England. Everybody gives liberally, under the sense of relief common to Protestants and Catholics. We have a short service in church and chapel in the morning; a dinner for the labourers; wrestling-matches, and a dance in the squire's big barn. The people who were most at sea about Guy can comprehend a thanksgiving and rejoicing for the fruits of the earth.

In the mountain districts of the country, the 5th of November fires were certainly a pretty sight, kindling and flaming on the crests or spurs of the hills, showing the outlines of the woods, and still glowing red when all the black figures in the front of them were gone home to bed; but there is probably no town in England, and no parish in any county, which does not rejoice that the vindictive service is dropped out of the church ritual, and the insulting triumph over fellow Christians hushed in the better temper which Time brings round.

The other old-fashioned celebration which marks November—Lord Mayor's Day—is of little interest

beyond London; and there everybody knows more about it than any country-cousin can tell. Within nineteen years the day has been distinguished by a truly national interest. As the birthday of the heir to the throne, the 9th of November is welcomed over a far broader area than even the United Kingdom. There are fifty colonies, planted down all over the globe, which have the same interest in the anniversary that we have. Last year, everybody in all those settlements was rejoicing that the Prince had prosperously reached the age of capacity for reigning. In two years more there will be congratulations on the privilege which he shares with every man in the nation,—the attainment of his actual majority. Last year, the blessing was more to the nation than to himself;—we were saved from the danger of a rule by proxy, which can never be insignificant, however (as in this case) improbable. The event of 1862 will be the more important to the Prince, as to be a man among men must ever be the highest privilege to a true man. Meantime, the Lord Mayor's ancient festival derives new brightness from its implication with the destinies of the Prince of Wales.

As soon as play is done, people have to go to work again. London, called "empty," up to the close of last month, is reviving,—beginning to give dinners, to attend the theatres, to organise the means of living and enjoying, for the multitude who will flock hither for "the season." The press feels the load of the new books of the season. The fishmongers are bespeaking ice for their cellars. The shopkeepers are exhibiting furs and warm garments. The milliners are engaging their "hands" for the crushing work of the coming months, before taking their final flight of the year to Paris, to study the fashions. The lawyers are in their haunts again. The parsons mount their pulpits, cured of their special "sore throat" for the time, by having stretched their limbs, instead of their voices, in stout exercise at home and abroad. The physicians, who stole away to avoid becoming patients, have come home openly, and are being fast forgiven by their sick acquaintance for leaving them. On the whole, London may perhaps enjoy setting to work again almost as much as going forth to play.

Townsfolk are much mistaken if they suppose that rural labour relaxes and almost stops because the year is declining. The notion was once true, perhaps. When Bishop Latimer's father was a farmer, the winter was a stoppage in the life of the husbandman, as it was in that of the fisherman. Though our ancestors ate much more fish than we do, the fishermen laid up their boats and gear in November, and settled down in their chimney-corner for the winter;—not wholly at play, perhaps, for they could make nets and prepare lines; but not dreaming of braving wind and weather in their calling. This must have been, I should think, after the return shoals of herrings—the November shoals—had gone by.

It was much the same in the farm-houses when the great work of killing and salting meat for the coming half-year was achieved. There was little to do in the farmyards and stalls in times when cattle could not be kept alive through the winter,

for want of fodder. The couple of cows, a team of horses, for which hay and straw might be mustered, were about all that had to be tended,—except, of course, poultry. The other beasts—kine and swine—were disposed of in salting-tubs; and when the beef and bacon were under smoke or in the rack, there was little more to do, unless with the flail.

So much the more was done by the fire-side, where a hundred things were made which we go to shops for now.

There may be more of these domestic handicrafts in farm-houses even yet than is supposed by people who live among shops. Let us see what the November work is in old-fashioned rural districts.

St. Martin's summer is a marked season there;—the few days of fine, calm weather which usually occur about Martinmas. It is a mistake to confound this with "the Indian summer" of North America, as is so often done. We often read of "the Indian summer" as consisting of weeks of weather like our Martinmas; whereas, as everybody knows who has passed a "fall" in the United States, the Indian summer lasts three or four days, and no more.

The cause of the phenomenon is not understood, remarkable as are the appearances. The stillness of the atmosphere is profound. The nut falling in the wood, the tread of the squirrel on the dead leaves, the splash of the wild-duck in the pool, seem like loud interruptions of the silence of Nature. The sunshine is mild,—even dim; for a haze hangs over the whole country, so marked that the supposition was, to the last moment, entertained that the fires of the Indians in the forest and prairies were the cause of the whole phenomenon. It was wonderful that it should occur, every year, quite punctually, and last four days; but this was the popular explanation of the warmth and the haze till the Indians were gone far away, and the apparent smoke hung everywhere, as before, in the absence of fires to account for it.

The inhabitants do not use their Indian summer as we do our St. Martin's. They give themselves up to the delicious languor that it induces, and loiter in the low and late sunshine, seeing the golden oob fall from the graceful maize-plant, and watching the latest flights of wild-fowl in the upper air, and catching the red and yellow leaves as they flutter to the ground. We, in our precious ten days of fine weather, have much to do.

The most important work is planting. Our woodmen and gardeners say that they will answer for ninety-nine trees in a hundred (in ordinary seasons), planted at Martinmas, and for not one planted after Candlemas. Hollies, so difficult to move to their satisfaction, must above all be humoured in their requirements. So we meet waggons, and carts, and wheelbarrows, laden with young trees; and we hear the spade in new plantations, and in gardens, and on lawns, and are tempted on all hands by the beguiling spectacle of planting. We all like to lend a hand, either in shifting the new tree to its place, upholding it, disposing or sousing the roots, earthing it up with dry soil, or staking it, to keep it upright under any

attack of wind. Then, the felling must get on while the weather favours; and it is important to build up the wood stacks, or secure the peat, before the rains come. The sheep must be turned out upon the turnips, and the ewes sheltered, and the bees brought in under winter cover. Lawns and fine pastures must be manured now, or half the benefit will be lost; so, while the ant-hills are levelled, and every drain and channel in the meadows is cleared out, the dung-cart and the load of crushed bones are coming along the lanes. Every foot of ground vacated by any garden crop must be trenched before wet weather; and all made manure must be not the less attended to. All the leaves that can be collected by the women and children living within hail must be heaped up in some place where they can be properly treated for next year's manuring; and all compost, or material intended for it, must be saved from being washed away by the expected rains.

Last month's rains having set the water-mills going, and the winter demands for straw being always severe, the threshing does not wait for bad weather, and the grain goes to the mill as soon as somebody tells that the great wheel is turning. The gardeners are giving the final pruning to the fruit-trees; and the household who love their orchard are clearing the stems of moss, and washing or coating them with lime and soot. There are early peas to be sown; and there is celery to be earthed up, and broccoli to be preserved; and dahlia roots must be taken up, and the beds deeply dug and manured. If we wish to open the new year with the promise of hyacinths, we must pot them now, and put them into the dark for six weeks, with a slight watering once a fortnight. By New Year's Day they will be sprouting well, and before January's over they will be in bloom. This seems to be plentiful occupation for the few short days of Saint Martin's summer, which is also far from being faithful in its attendance. But there is one more work which ought not to be delayed.

There are few neighbourhoods in which the labourers are so certain of subsistence during the winter as not to need the special care of the richer residents. The ordinary, and the best, way of exercising this care is by providing seasonable work. Now, therefore, is the time when engineers and landscape gardeners, or landowners who have a taste of their own, or think they have, are busy in settling the details of alterations and improvements in public and private property. November usually sees the beginning of changes and embellishments which will benefit generations to come. Pleasant as it is to watch old women and children busy in sweeping and clearing the grass-plats and walks, it is more so to see the stout labourers shouldering their tools, in the dawn of morning, cheerful in the prospect of a winter's employment on the new drive in the park, or the squire's new plantation, or the cut which is to make road or stream more available for public use. Within the house there is as much for busy hands to do. When the cry of the stag is heard from the deer-park, and the gobble of the turkey, and the screech of the peacock from the paddock and lawn, the dismal last squeal of the porker comes from

the piggery. It is the season of sausage-making and black-puddings (for those who like them), and pork pies (which everybody likes), and for the curing of hams and bacon. The cook's office is rather a dignified one this month. There are the very last preserves—apple jelly, for one—to be made; and oysters in their many forms occupy her; and hare, whether in soup, or boned, or jugged; and geese, with the concomitant giblet-pie or soup; and the delicious grayling which so many of our rivers yield; and the sprats which date from Lord Mayor's Day, and for the sake of which gentlemen will dine or sup in the kitchen, that the frying-pan may be within a second of their plates. These are among the dainties of November.

After these busy short days there are long evenings which are not idle. In cottages and in farmhouse kitchens, in old-fashioned districts, men are as busy as the women. They are mending their tools, or cobbling their shoes, or patching their waistcoats, or making tackle and traps for fish and rabbits, or weaving baskets or bee-hives, or making netting of wire or twine, or splitting rods for hoops; or, where there is room, making hurdles or hen-coops. This is a field where ingenuity and dexterity are sure to be duly honoured.

In other sitting-rooms, in parlours, and drawing-rooms, what is doing meanwhile?

It is a season for entering upon a course of study, of a language, or a science, or a period of history. It is the season for opening the annual domestic Shakspeare club; the weekly or fortnightly meeting which brings two or three neighbourly families together to read a play. No summer evening can put down by comparison the charms of the Shakspeare club, where there is no constraint, but enjoyments as diversified as the resources of the idol of the night. This is the season for music, and for a dance before bed-time, to send all warm and cheerful to their rest. It is also the season of some bitter storms, of gusty days and wild nights, and moaning blasts, and dashing floods. It has its evil and its good, like all the seasons of Nature and human life: but I think I have shown that it is a mere dwelling on the dark side of things to be always talking of this month as "gloomy November."

A RUN FOR A PLACE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the annual increase in the Civil Service Estimates, and the efforts which, we learn from "Punch," are being made in Dean's Yard to raise the examinations to the proper standard, the Service is not what it was. We use these words in the popular and depreciatory sense, with the conventional shake of the head as we write them, which our readers may have observed to be their usual accompaniment. The present system has a tendency to check the graceful benevolence of the Prime Minister; and is there any virtue which a liberal nation, like the English, could wish to see more strongly developed in that functionary? Snug berths are on the decrease. There is a mean and revolutionary idea becoming prevalent that men should work their way upwards; in fact, that it is better to enter the ship through the hawse-hole than by the cabin win-

dows. It has become more difficult now for a secretary of state to reward, with a quiet two thousand a-year, the Eton chum who stood point to his bowling, or the Christchurch man who kept on the same staircase, and helped him to screw in the dean. But some five-and-thirty years ago, such an exercise of benevolence was not only possible but practicable, and occasionally practised.

On a fine May morning, in the year 182—, Mr. Scenter was pacing the High Street of that large sea-port, Shortpond, with very rapid steps. He had not got more than a dozen yards down the left-hand side before he met Mr. Chaser. Now, Chaser was a man whom he knew so well, that he felt bound to stop and speak a word to him, though evidently chafing at the delay.

"Heard the news?" he inquired.

"No,—what is it?" replied Chaser.

"Filliter died at nine this morning."

"You don't say so."

And they nodded and passed on.

Now, be it known to our readers, that the lamented Filliter had been his Majesty's Inspector of Hampers and Comptroller of Carpet-bags in the good port of Shortpond. The duties connected with that office were admirably performed by subordinates with whom Filliter had the good sense not to interfere, feeling that he should probably obstruct public business if he did. He therefore limited his attendance at the Hamper and Carpet-bag office, appearing there only on the last day of each quarter, when he signed his salary-receipt for five hundred pounds.

Mr. Scenter walked on pretty rapidly until he reached the Blue Lion. A quarter of an hour afterwards he was rattling along the London road as fast as a postchaise-and-four could take him.

He had good reasons for his haste. He had had the honour of blacking the Prime Minister's boots in earlier days, as his fag at Eton, and the acquaintance had not been allowed to drop. When Lord C—— came in, it was clearly understood that something was to be done for Scenter. They had only been waiting for a vacancy to occur, which might be worth his acceptance. The office of Inspector of Hampers and Comptroller of Carpet-bags at Shortpond was the very thing. Pleasant visions floated in his brain as he lolled back in the chaise and enjoyed the exhilaration of rapid motion; for the post-boys had been made clearly to understand that their tip would depend on their pace.

It occurred to him that an additional two thousand a-year was the exact sum which, as he had frequently observed, would make him comfortable. When he reached the end of the first stage, he continued his meditations in the inn-yard, pacing up and down, as he waited for fresh horses.

He was still debating about a second hunter, and a pair of greys for Mrs. S——, thinking which purchase he should make first, when a second postchaise-and-four dashed into the yard, with horses a shade more blown than his own.

Out of this vehicle stepped Mr. Chaser. Now Mr. Chaser's relations with the noble lord at the head of the government were not very dissimilar in their nature to Mr. Scenter's, as the latter gentleman now remembered.

If he had thought of it about an hour before in the High Street of Shortpond, it is possible that he would not have been so communicative on the subject of Filliter's death.

As the two men met, the first glance they exchanged told each the other's object.

"Of course we are bound on the same errand?" said Scenter.

"Then we may as well travel together," said Chaser. "The winner can pay the shot."

"By all means." So the bargain was made. By the tacit consent of both parties the subject of the appointment was tabooed during their journey. After seventeen hours' posting, they arrived in London at half-past three a.m.

"Nothing to be done for the next four hours," said Scenter, "so I shall take a snooze. I shall be stirring pretty early in the morning, though."

"Perhaps it would be as well," replied Chaser; but whether this was intended to apply to the former or the latter part of his friend's observation, there was nothing to show.

So Mr. Scenter walked off to bed, giving the strictest orders to the boots to call him at six. Mr. Chaser waited in the coffee-room until his friend had retired, and then took a hackney-coach to Lord C——'s.

He found no difficulty in obtaining admittance, but when he said he must see Lord C—— immediately, it was quite another thing.

"His lordship did not come back from the house till past two, and I know he was very tired, and cannot possibly be disturbed."

"I must see him all the same," said the persevering Chaser, "and immediately too."

"Is it despatches, sir?"

"Of more importance than despatches," was the reply.

"Very sorry, sir, but it is quite impossible; it would be as much as my place is worth."

"How much is your place worth?" inquired Chaser with the most perfect coolness, for it was whispered that Lord C—— was not the best paymaster in the world.

To this query the domestic did not find a ready reply, so Chaser pushed two bank-notes into his hand, and passing him, charged up the staircase three steps at a time. The contemplation of the signature, "Abraham Newland," to which perhaps his eyes had not lately been accustomed, prevented the servant from stopping him.

Chaser soon found his way to Lord C——'s bedroom. That nobleman was aroused by his knock at the door.

"Who's there?"

"Alvanley Chaser."

"And what gives me the pleasure of seeing, or rather blinking at, Mr. Alvanley Chaser at this hour of the morning?"

"Filliter is dead."

"And who may Filliter be? or rather, I should say, what may Filliter have been?"

"Inspector of Hampers and Comptroller of Carpet-bags for Shortpond."

"I understand."

"May I have it?"

"Well, you are certainly the first in the field,

and I suppose if I wish to have my night's rest, I had better say 'yes,' at once."

Chaser turned to the pen and ink on the dressing-table and began to write.

"Won't you take my word?" said Lord C——.

"Why, you know between man and man I should prefer your word to anybody's; but, as a minister, I should like to have your signature to this."

Lord C—— laughed, and put his autograph to the formal promise Chaser had written out.

"And now I won't disturb you any longer."

"Thank you; come to breakfast."

"I shall be most happy. Adieu."

And Chaser returned to the hotel, gave orders that he should be called at eight, and went comfortably to bed.

Mr. Scenter arose at six in the morning. To tell the truth, notwithstanding the fatigue of his journey, he had not been able to sleep. At six then he arose, and arranged himself carefully for an interview with the great man. It is strange how careful men are upon these occasions, although, upon cross-examination, they would aver that their personal appearance could make no difference to the result of their application. On reflection, Scenter would have felt that his chance might have been strengthened, if he could have become an Eton boy once more; but that a round jacket and ink-stained trousers would scarcely become a corpulent gentleman with a bald head.

Nevertheless, during his drive to Lord C——'s, he was tormented by a hole in his glove, and anatomised the laziness of London hosiery, whose shops were not likely to be opened for some hours to come. He arrived at Lord C——'s at seven. He had the advantage of being known to the servants, for he had dined at the house more than once, when he was last in town. He was informed that Lord C—— would be down at half-past nine, and a dounceur obtained the promise that he should be shown in before any one else.

This promise was faithfully kept. As Scenter waited in the library he was surprised that he saw nothing of his friend. He comforted himself with the reflection that the servants might possibly have kept him in the hall.

As the clock struck the half-hour he was ushered into Lord C——'s presence.

In a very few words he stated the fact of Filliter's death, and asked for the appointment.

"I am very sorry," replied Lord C——, "I should really have been very glad to have obliged you, but it is already promised."

"Promised!" said Scenter. "Why, he only died at nine o'clock yesterday morning."

"It is more than promised," replied Lord C——, "it is already given away. In fact, I have affixed my signature to the appointment."

"Then I will not detain you, my lord."

"You had better stay and have some breakfast."

Alas, Scenter did not feel equal to breakfast at that moment. Therefore he declined the invitation, unwisely, for he might have heard of something else; and there were many other appointments for which he was as fit as he was

for the control of the hampers and carpet-bags at Shortpond.

He departed sorrowfully. It is to be feared that if there was one crumb of comfort on which he allowed his imagination to feed, it was on the belief that Chaser had been equally unsuccessful.

Of this morsel he was destined soon to be deprived. As he descended the steps of the house he met Chaser coming up.

"It is no use," he said to that gentleman, "you are too late."

"For breakfast?" inquired Mr. Chaser.

"No, for the appointment; it has been given away."

"Yes, to me," observed Chaser, "at four this morning."

After this the conversation was not prolonged.

H.

NON SATIS.



'Tis not enough to see thee, like a star

That rises on our sight when eve is clear,
Which all may view—but all must view afar.

'Tis not enough to watch thee, as the moon

Gazes on earth with steadfast face, but ne'er
May voice with voice exchange and intertune.

'Tis not enough to meet thee as by chance

In lighted rooms, and feign a cold repose,—
Whereas I tremble to thy slightest glance.

'Tis not enough to cross thee in the glare

Of day, when serried friends thy path inclose,—
Content the sunlight of thy smile to share.

No ! I am jealous of all senseless things

That near and touch thee—of the fluttering wind
That dallies round with fond, familiar wings,
And dares to kiss thine eyes and lift the tress

From thy blue temple ;—of the jewel blind
Upon thy bosom pillow'd, passionless.

And I could rend the flower that thou dost pluck,

And drink its odour with thy nostrils fine,
And taste its honey which the bee did suck.

Oh ! I could kill thy sleek caressing hound

That feels thy hand, and blameless may entwine
Thy feet, when'er he choose to bound.

For I would have thee, as the miser hoards
His idol gold, lock'd close with ponderous key,
In chest of brazen bands round ebony boards.
I could not rest until with sails unfurl'd
I bore my treasure o'er the secret sea,
To some oasis of the desert world.

Because I want thee ALL;—and nothing less
Than thy *whole being* would my heart suffice,—
Thee and thy love entire I must possess.
No jot withheld,—no atom of thy love
Passing the sphere of adamant ice,
Within whose vault we must in oneness move.

BERNI.

THE ROMANCE OF THE RANKS.

If any one of our readers desires to acquaint himself with all the dreary formalities, drudgery, and minutiae of a soldier's life, he may consult at his leisure a volume called the "Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Army," a portly octavo, numbering some 450 pages. He will there learn that even in the piping times of peace, there are irksome duties, besides "standing for twelve hours together in the trenches up to the knees in cold water, or engaged for months together in long dangerous marches, harassed, perhaps, in his rear to-day,—harassing others to-morrow; detached here, countermanded there; resting this night out upon his arms, beat up in his shirt the next, hunched in his joints, perhaps without straw in his tent to kneel on." He will also then find some excuse if a weary man takes his calumet, or throws himself on his camp-bed, and does not read quite as assiduously as his more fortunate brother citizens, especially when his only library consists of the few books which he can conveniently carry when subjected to frequent change of quarters, and his only additional resources are the meagre circulating library of a garrison town; whilst often, if on recruiting service, or detachment in some remote neighbourhood, he will be denied even those meagre means of relaxation.

There are, however, even in the volume which we have mentioned, a few amusing pages; they are headed "titles, badges, devices, mottoes and distinctions of regiments of cavalry, artillery, engineers, and infantry, to be borne on their standards and guidons, or on their regimental colour." A few remarks grounded on these interesting pages, and partly illustrated from Mr. Cannon's valuable, but still incomplete History of the British Army, will not be without their use, when the formation of depot battalions is tending rapidly to the weakening, and perhaps extinction of the old esprit de corps, which is to a regiment the foundation of its chivalry and well-doing. The blazon on its colours, the distinctive honours bestowed by the sovereign, and the old traditions give a life to individual regiments, which it would be perilous to its good to lose. It has been the policy of the military authorities to foster this spirit, by giving to particular corps a national distinction; as in the case of English regiments which carry the Lion-crest, the badge of the Order of the Garter, with its motto, or that of the sovereign; and in the instance of

Scotch regiments which bear the cross and motto of St. Andrew; just as the Irish regiments are distinguished by the Harp of old Erin, or the badge and motto of St. Patrick; and the Welch regiments are known by the Prince of Wales's plume and motto, or by the Dragon and Rising Sun of the principality: whilst in remembrance of the time when Hanover was an appanage of the British crown, the White Horse and motto of Brunswick have been in some instances retained.

Since the year 1782, county titles have been also borne by particular regiments, in remembrance of the places where they were first raised; although, subsequently, some of the original designations have been changed. The following counties are represented:—Bedford, Bucks, Dorset, Durham, Cornwall, Devon, Essex, Hants, Leicester, Lincoln, Northumberland, Monmouth, Norfolk, Huntingdon, Middlesex, Hertford, North, Gloucester, Rutland, Stafford, Wilts, Lancashire, York and Lancaster, York, Suffolk, Kent, Warwick, Westmoreland, Cumberland, Oxford, Northumberland, Worcester, Derby, Somerset, Northampton, Cambridge, Salop, Surrey, Hereford, Derby and the Borders. Several counties give name to more than one regiment, whilst York furnishes a still larger proportion. The titles of four of these corps, the Loyal Lincoln Volunteers, the Bucks and Stafford Volunteers, and the 82nd Prince of Wales's Volunteers, remind us of that magnificent force which within little more than a year has been raised in this country, where conscription and compulsory service are alike unknown. In Ireland, Connaught and County Down, and the town of Inniskilling; and in Scotland, Lanarkshire, Ross-shire, Argyllshire, Perthshire, the town of Coldstream, and the city of Edinburgh, still give names to regiments. The 26th are "Cameronians," and the 79th "Cameron Highlanders."

It was not until the year 1694, that a military board determined the relative rank of regiments in England by priority of formation; and in the case of Scotch or Irish corps, by the date of their being placed on the establishment of England. At a still later date, on July 1, 1751, a Royal warrant was issued requiring the regimental number to be embroidered upon the regimental colour, thus causing the previous inconvenient method, of designating a corps by the name of its commanding officer for the time being, to be abandoned.

The origin of particular corps is a subject of too great a length to be considered in the present paper; the mottoes and badges of some regiments are of historic, whilst others are of a still more special interest. The 1st Dragoons are known by "Spectemur agendo;" and "Vestigia nulla retrorsum" the Coldstream Guards, "Nulli Secundum," used in the vernacular, "Second to None," by the 2nd Dragoons in allusion to their position upon the Army List; the 16th Lancers have the apt words, "Aut curru aut cominus armis!" the 15th Hussars give the modest promise of "Merebimur;" while the Scots' Fusilier Guards rejoice in the double motto of "En ferus hostis," and "Uicita fortior;" the 2nd Infantry bear the words, "Pristina virtutis memores," and "Vel exuvie triumphans." The former motto was won

by that regiment in 1703, at the siege of Tongras : their badge of the Paschal Lamb, the ensign of Portugal, was granted to it in honour of the Queen, Katharine of Braganza, in 1661, as they are known as the Queen's Royals ; but it was perverted into a cruel slander when the regiment was commanded by Colonel Kirke, in 1685, when their popular designation of Kirke's lambs, was attributed to their presence at the "Bloody Asizes," of Judge Jeffreys. The "Quò fata vocant," of the 5th Fusiliers, took origin, probably, in a regimental order of merit, established in 1767. The "Antelope" of the 6th Foot, has been referred to the circumstance of their capture of a Spanish standard, at Saragossa, in 1710. The "Sphinx," of the 13th and other regiments, commemorates their share in the campaign in Egypt, in 1801. The 12th, 39th, and 56th, and other corps wear their "Castle and Key," with the motto "Montis Insignia Calpe,"—the Arms of Gibraltar, given by Henry IV, of Castile—for their heroic defence of the "Castle-Key" of the Mediterranean in 1783. The 39th received in 1757, the royal authority to adopt the motto "Primus in India," in 1757. The royal tiger of Hindostan appears on the colours of the 14th and 17th, as the reward of gallant service. The elephant appears also a badge. The "Firm" of the 36th dates back upwards of seventy years. The "Britannia" of the 9th Foot, confirmed to them in 1799, probably refers to their part in the war of the Spanish Succession. The 18th bear the Arms of Nassau in memory of their storming of Namur, in 1695, under the eyes of William of Orange ; and the word "China," with "the Dragon," for their campaign in 1840-2. The "Green Dragon" of the 3rd Buffs, granted in 1707, has a different origin ; it was one of the royal supporters of Queen Elizabeth, in whose reign the regiment was formed out of the loyal London citizens ; and it still possesses the peculiar privilege of marching through the streets of the "City" with music playing and colours flying. When the 31st were embodied, the 3rd received the popular appellation of the "Old Buffs," by way of distinction to the "Young Buffs ;" both, however, derived their name from their accoutrements of buffalo leather. The "Bold Fifth" is a sobriquet of long standing ; they wore a red and white feather, and subsequently a white plume, in honour of their rout of the French Grenadiers, at Morne Fortune, in the West Indies, when their success was so complete that every man was able to furnish his cap with the white plumes of the enemy. The 87th have the proud distinction of the Eagle of the 8th French regiment of the Line, as it was the first taken in action during the Peninsular war, having been captured at Barossa, in 1811. The kettle-drums of the 3rd, or King's Own Light Dragoons were taken at Dettingen ; and when the 34th Foot embarked for the Crimean war, they were compelled, out of courtesy to our Allies, to leave in store in England, their entire corps of brass drums, having taken them by a curious coincidence from the 34th French Infantry, at Arroyo dos Molinos. The King's Royal Irish, 8th Hussars, in 1715, were permitted to wear buff sword belts, suspended across the right shoulder, as a memorial of their rout of the Spanish

cavalry, at Almanza ; they were also the well-known "Pepper's Dragoons," whom George I. sent to overawe the Jacobites at tory Oxford, while he gave a fine library to whiggish Cambridge,—a delicate distinction which provoked this witty epigram in reply to a Cambridge sarcasm :—

Our royal master saw with heedful eyes,
The wants of his two Universities,
Troops he to Oxford sent, as knowing why
That learned body wanted loyalty,
Books he to Cambridge gave, as well discerning
That that most loyal body wanted learning.

The 41st carry the Welsh motto, "Gwell angau na Chywilydd ;" the 78th, the Gallic "Cuidich'n Rhi ;" the 85th are known by "Aucto splendore resurgo ;" the Artillery and Engineers, by the words "Ubique," and "Quò fas et gloria ducunt ;" and the amphibious Marine, by the well-chosen motto, "Per mare, per terras." The "Death's Head" and the motto, "Or glory," have been carried by the 12th Lancers since 1759, when Colonel Hale determined to compose the regiment of men of decided character, emulous of the gallantry of General Wolfe, whose death he had witnessed on the heights of Mount Abraham. The name of the "Carabineers," 6th Dragoon Guards, dates back to 1691. The 56th are popularly known as the Pompadours, as, when raised in 1756, their facings were originally puce, the favourite colour of the worthless Madame de Pompadour ; and when their facings were changed, their colonel, failing to obtain "blue," the distinction of Royals, for the regiment, adopted purple as the nearest approach to it. The Royal Horse Guards are ordinarily known as "the Blues," from the colour of their uniform. It is an old mess-room joke and legend, that the tailors having used up all their scarlet cloth, were compelled to make up the deficiency in cuffs and collars, by fragments of various colours ; and this was the origin, (so the veracious "oldster" assures the "younger,") of the facings of the British Army. The 13th Light Dragoons were known from the colour of their facings as "the Green Dragoons," to which their motto, "Viret in æternum" refers, and was confirmed in 1836, the green facings having been restored three years before. The 97th are known as "Celestials," from their sky-blue facings. The "Lincoln Green" of the 69th, is a subject of their pride. The dingy, and ill-assorted black-and-white worsted braid of the 50th, caused them to be known as the "Dirty Half-hundred." The sombre dress, blue-black and green tartan, worn by the companies raised for the protection of Edinburgh in 1730-2, was the origin of their name "Freidandian Dhu," the "Black Watch," in contradistinction to the scarlet of the Line, who were called "red soldiers,"—an appellation which was transferred to the 42nd Highlanders, who were formed out of their ranks in 1740. The 2nd Dragoon Guards, are known as the "Queen's Bays," from the fact of their being mounted on bay horses in 1767. The "Fighting 9th," were also called in the Peninsular war "the holy boys," from a sale of Bibles. The 37th, from their bravery at Albuera, were known as the "Die Harde ;" the 62nd for their courage in America, were famous

as "the Springers." The Light Company of the 45th wear the distinctive mark of a red ball instead of green, the usual colour; in 1777, the Americans were so galled by their fire, that they vowed that they would give them no quarter, and the gallant fellows stained their feathers red to save their friends from suffering by any mistake. The 22nd wear a sprig of oak in their shakoes on the Queen's birthday, in memory of services rendered to George II. at Dettingen. The 28th wear the plato in front and at the back of their shakoes, in memory of their gallant defence in Egypt against a charge of cavalry in front and rear, and are known as "the Slashers," owing to their terrible use of the short sword, then worn by the infantry, during the American war. The 87th are called the "Faugh-a-ballagh Boys," from their famous faction-fight cry of "Fag-an-healac," "clear the way," at Barossa.

The 14th Dragoons carry the "Prussian Eagle," as it was called in 1798, in honour of the Duchess of York, the Princess Royal of Prussia. The titles of "King's Own," "Queen's Own," "Royal," the "Prince of Wales's" (82nd and 10th Hussars), "the Princess Charlotte of Wales" (49th), the "Earl of Ulster's" (97th), the "Duke of Wellington's" (33rd), have all been won by

Most disastrous chances,

By moving accidents by flood and field,

By hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach.

One curious circumstance is on record. We all know that regimental colours are consecrated, and generally find their last home in the aisles of a cathedral, or in the Hall of Chelms: but in 1763, the colours of the 25th Regiment, then commanded by Lord W. Lennox, having been ridicled with shot, at Minden, and hanging in mere strips from the staff, were interred in New-castle-on-Tyne, with military honours. On the other hand, the standards captured at Culloden, were burnt by the common hangman.

A few more notes, and we must draw these sketches to a close; although we are tempted to dilate on pedigrees and achievements, and the succession of colonels of the various regiments. In 1572, troops of horse were called cornets; and companies of foot were styled ensigus. In the reign of Charles II. the junior officer of horse was known as a "cornet," and in 1679, a corporal of horse, saluted as a "brigadier." The dragoon derives his name from the Elizabethan fire-arm, called dragon, from the monster which figured on the muzzle; the Carabineers represent the Spanish Light Cavalry first mentioned, in 1579, as Carabins, possibly, from their use of the carbine—a weapon employed on board of the vessels called "carabe." The Scotch Fusiliers, now the 21st Foot, raised in 1678, were the first to take that name, which is one of French origin, denoting a weapon lighter than a musket: while the bayonet was invented at Bayonne about the same period. The helmet and the cuirass are the last relics of the old armour of our troops, since the gorget, a diminutive breastplate, has been discontinued; the sash, once worn round the waist, was designed to give means of removing the wounded officer to the rear: the signileta of the Cavalry represents the

cord with which they bound up their forage, and the cord on the belts of the Household Cavalry was once attached to the priming-horn of the bandolier. Scarlet was worn by the soldiers of Henry V.; green and white were the Tudor colours; in 1678, Evelyn describes Grenadiers (a French term) in piebald red and yellow: and it was only in the reign of Queen Anne that scarlet was definitely established. The officer's cockade of the time of the Georges has been removed to the hats of servants, and naval officers alone retain it. The serjeant no longer carries a halbert. The Prussian sugar-loaf cap, immortalised by Hogarth in the March to Finchley, is a costume of the past. Pig-tails and pomatum, the three-cornered cocked-hat, gaiters, and docked horse-tails, have all happily followed the same example; while the Polish caps of our Lancers date back about forty years, and the bearskins of the Guards to the reign of George III. The three-tailed bag of black silk worn by the officers of the 23rd Fusiliers is, probably, a relic of the queue. The uniform of the present day is certainly more convenient and handsome than, if not so picturesque as that of an earlier period, and when stocks are unknown, shakoes made of an improved shape, and knapsacks better adjusted, we may, perhaps, believe it incapable of improvement.

Glorious, indeed, it is to read on the colours of our regiments the scrolls labelled with the names of hard-won fields, in every quarter of the globe; they are subjects for an honourable pride, and incentives to a generous emulation. Let us have examinations, and motives and necessity for study on the part of both candidates and actual officers, though we cannot fail to remember that many a gallant fellow, whom we remember incapable of application to books, down in the lowest form of old Winchester, did good service at Alma and Inkermann, and by an acquaintance with manly sports has raised up a cheerful spirit amongst his men in the piping time of peace. A mere pedant in any class of life is a poor creature. We do not want "the gallant militarist that has the whole theories of war in the knot of his scarf, and the practice in the chape of his dagger." The future battles of England will never be won by men who cannot "set a squadron in the field, nor know the division of a battle;" never by the mere successful competitor who achieves his superiority by force of memory, or the cram of a few months.

The bookish theorist

Wherein the toga'd Consuls can propose

As mastery as he; mere prattle, without practice,

Is all his soldiership.

MACKENZIE E. C. WALCOTT.

THE GLOW-WORM.

AMONGST the several luminous insects of this country, the Glow-worm is undoubtedly the most interesting. Who that has walked along shady lanes, and in woodland scenery, where these insects abound, on a calm, warm summer's evening, but has been delighted with the effulgence of these creatures, sparkling like little stars of earth, and glowing like night-tapers with beauty? Shakespeare, with his wonderful knowledge of nature,

has not failed to observe that as morning approached, the light of the Glow-worm was extinguished—

The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire.

The poet Waller also described the same fact. He supposes a man to have found a glow-worm for the first time, and thinks he has possessed himself of—

A moving diamond, a breathing stone;
For life it had, and like those jewels shone:
He held it dear, 'till, by the springing day
Informed, he threw the worthless grub away.

But let us inquire a little into its natural history, and this will not be found without its interest. Some doubts have occurred as to the food of the glow-worm. From actual observation, it has been ascertained that its larvæ feed on snails, decayed worms, &c., and are decidedly carnivorous. Neither old nor young touch plants as food. The larvæ are very voracious in their habits; but it is supposed that the perfect insect eats but little. If it does eat, it probably feeds on animal substance.

The female is without wings, and is far more luminous than the male. She may sometimes be found crawling up a blade of grass, to make herself more conspicuous, and in order—

To captivate her favourite fly,
And tempt the rover through the dark.

The males have wings, and may be seen hovering over the females in twilight. The male is a ditsy, slender scarabæus. The females have the power of extinguishing or concealing their light; and Mr. White of Selborne thinks that they put it out altogether between eleven and twelve every night, and shine no more that evening. This wise provision of nature may probably be for the purpose of preventing their being preyed upon by nocturnal birds. Indeed, it has been supposed that nightingales feed on them; and certainly the favourite haunts of these birds are often in localities where glow-worms abound. It may be mentioned that as soon as the female has deposited her eggs (which by the way shine in the dark), the light disappears in both sexes.

Persons who eat peaches, apricots, and other stoned fruit (and who does not?) may often find a little centipede about an inch and a half, or two inches long, curled up in the centre of the fruit. This insect, if placed in a glass, and looked at when it is dark, will be found to be considerably luminous. Blumenbach asserts that another luminous insect gives such a strong light, that two of them placed in a glass, gave sufficient light to read by. The fire-flies of hot countries have wings, both male and female; so that when they occur in great quantities, they exhibit a brilliant spectacle to the inhabitants. That pest of farmers, the wire-worm, is, we believe, luminous.

Messrs. Kirby and Spence give an interesting account of the *Blater noctilucus*, with which we will conclude this article. This insect has the luminous property in a very high degree. It is an inch long, and about one third of an inch broad. It gives out its principal light from two

transparent eye-like tubercles placed upon the thorax; but it has also two luminous patches concealed under the wings, which are not visible except when the insect is flying, at which time it appears with fine brilliant gems of the most beautiful golden-blue lustre. In fact, the whole body is full of light, which is so considerable, that the smallest print may be read by moving one of these insects along the lines. In the West Indies, and particularly in St. Domingo, where they are very common, the natives employ these living lamps instead of candles, in performing their evening household occupations. Southey has introduced this insect in his "*Madoc*," as furnishing the lamp by which Coatel rescued the British hero from the hands of the Mexican priests:—

She beckon'd and descended, and drew out
From underneath her vest a cage, or net
It rather might be call'd, so fine the twigs
Which knit it, where, confined, two fireflies gave
Their lustre. By that light did Madoc first
Behold the features of his lovely guide.

EDWARD JESSE.

THE FAMOUS CITY OF PRAGUE.

THE ancient city of Prague is splendidly situated upon a hill overlooking the new town, with which it is connected by two bridges across the river Moldau, which divides these civic hemispheres as widely as Hyde Park separates the social worlds of Tyburnia and Belgravia; for, though the imperial palace and the residence of the Cardinal Prince Primate of Bohemia are the most prominent edifices of the Hradschin, still the Emperor Ferdinand in the halls of his ancestors, and Prince Schwarzenburg in the saloons of the Archiepiscopal Palace, are as much deserted by the fashionables of the new town as though the interesting old stone-bridge and the new suspension-bridge did not exist, and the river formed an insuperable barrier to communication between the ancient and modern cities. But, though deserted by fashion, the objects of interest are a thousand-fold greater in the Hradschin than anything the Neu Stadt can offer — the lovers of novelty alone excepted. The cathedral forms a very prominent point for miles round. Situated in the main court of the palace, above which it towers, its pinnacle is seen at an immense distance by whatever road the capital is approached. The style of its architecture is that known in England by the name of the Early English; and, should it ever be completed, it will be one of the most worthy of notice of any of the great cathedrals of Europe. Though the chancel alone is in a finished state, it is amply large enough for every service of an archiepiscopal cathedral to a city of upwards of 180,000 inhabitants. There is a covered gallery communicating between the cathedral and the palace, to enable its inhabitants to attend Divine service without passing through the great court.

On the side of the cathedral, fronting the palace, is one of the most remarkable specimens of the early art of founding extant in Europe, and one which particularly excited the admiration of our great armorial antiquary, Sir Samuel Meyrick, in his visit to this city. It is a bronze equestrian statue

of St. George, of the eleventh century. The scale-armour and all the details of the horse-furniture are beautifully executed, and in as excellent preservation as though but recently delivered from the *atelier* of the artist.

The oldest part of the palace now standing was built by Charles IV., in the middle of the fourteenth century, though it was modernised in the sixteenth; the present fabric is of much more recent date. Its size appears truly gigantic to those accustomed to look only on the metropolitan residence of our own sovereign; but it is by no means too capacious for its several requirements, being not only intended as the abode of the various branches of the imperial family, but likewise containing under the same roof the different

salles appropriated for the meeting of the senate and the transaction of governmental duties. At the furthest end, overlooking the Moldau, are the Imperial Chapter of Canonesses, an order instituted by the benevolent Maria Theresa for indigent ladies of high descent, who under this institution enjoy privileges otherwise far beyond their reach. The abbess of this order must always be a member of the imperial family, and, upon her marriage or death, another archduchess must be appointed to succeed her by the Empress. But let not the reader suppose that because the lady president is styled an Abbess any severe monastic rules of seclusion are required. These ladies mix in the *beau monde*, as do the gayest of our own dames of fashion, dancing with a vigour rarely equalled by a London



The Bridge at Prague.

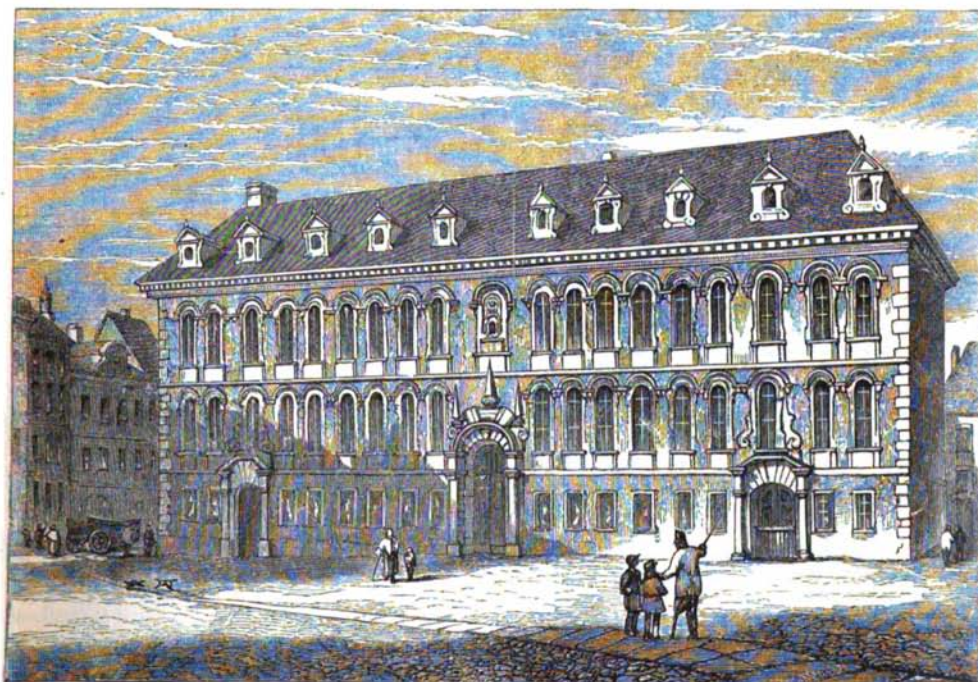
belle, or are to be seen nightly at the theatre in the box provided for them in the rules of their order, as laid down by their kind foundress: they never need a *chaperone*, as, whatever their age, once chanoinesses they cease to be mademoiselles, and if but seventeen they are styled "madame," and considered fit to be a *garde-dame* to any unmarried lady, however much their senior. Servants and equipages are at their disposal; they receive a trifling pension, and are free to marry if they please, but of course then cease to be chanoinesses. All that is required of these fortunate ladies is to attend chapel every morning; on certain occasions to appear before their Abbess in a particular costume, consisting of a black mantle and a Marie Stuart hat with long white lace veils pendant from the sides, most graceful and becoming to the

young and fair; and when in society of an *evening* to wear black dresses with the white order-ribbon, fringed with gold, under one arm and gathered on the opposite shoulder into a large knot, with a medallion-likeness of the Empress Maria Theresa pendant from the centre. That portion of the palace appropriated to the assembly of the senate bears date from the seventeenth century.

Leaving the palace, we pass the archiepiscopal residence, and stand in front of a very handsome pile of buildings forming an entire side of the Hradschin Platz, the property of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, inhabited solely by his agents, men of business, and their families, but which, judging from the present tide his affairs have taken, H.I.H. may, ere long, be happy to have set in order for his own use. Higher, upon

a hill, the culminating point of the city, are the convent and gardens of the White Monks, so called from their dress of white serge. The object of peculiar interest to strangers in this establishment is the magnificence of their library and collections of MSS. maps, charts, and globes. It possesses also some very valuable paintings, the merits of which are now much defaced from being daubed over with coarse reparations. The gardens are extensive, and open to the public, and command a fine view of the city, across the river, of the Neu Stadt, and far away to the heights beyond. At the time of the troubles, in 1848, these White Monks of Strahoff were looked on suspiciously by the government from their well-known leaning to the Czeck insurrection.

On descending the hill through the principal street the attention is often painfully drawn to the clanking of chains, and we find it proceeds from miserable beings who are employed in cutting wood for firing at the different houses—wood being the sole article of fuel consumed in Bohemia, where all rooms are heated by large china or iron stoves. The parti-coloured dress of these wretched beings—one half their persons clad in black, and the other half in yellow, the imperial colours—show them instantly to be convicts, if the chains confining their legs have not before revealed their position as felons. It is the government system, instead of confining prisoners in their cells, to employ them in various useful labours, and the most usual work is cutting wood



Wallenstein's House at Prague.

for the public, a policeman being in charge of each group while thus occupied.

Turning out of Nicholas Platz, a spot of much interest is shortly before us—the Waldstein's Palace—once the abode of the renowned Wallenstein, and now in possession of his nearest descendants through the female line, that hero having left no son to perpetuate his glory and avenge his fate. "Put not your trust in Princes," everyone may well exclaim with King David, on remembering what was done and sacrificed for his sovereign by that noble man, and what was the treacherous end he met with by the decree of the monarch he had served so long and faithfully. His gallant charger, which shared with him so many dangers and glories, is stuffed and stands in a hall of this princely mansion, looking really life-like, so well is the skin preserved, and so true

the action. In a magnificent *salle* in the centre of the house are sometimes held the prettiest and most tastefully arranged flower-shows the writer has ever seen—turf and moss so artistically laid down in beds over flower-pots that they are entirely concealed from view, producing the effect of all the wonders and beauties of nature springing from and growing out of the ground itself—a deception which might advantageously be copied in our own country.

Count Irvin Nostitz's galleries of statues and paintings are also worth a visit before the traveller leaves the *Kleine Seite*. And, should the weather be very oppressive, an hour's lounge in the gardens of Prince Lobkowitz, under the chestnut groves, would agreeably complete his morning's expedition, though we should recommend him not finally to cross the bridge without taking a peep at the church and hospital of the Knights of St.

John, more generally known as the Knights of Malta, and the official residence of their Grand Master for Bohemia, which joins the church.

(To be continued.)

BLACK VENN.

CHAPTER I. NATURAL.

THE superb curve of the cliffs, east of the little borough town of Lyme Regis, describes an arc of about 30 miles in length terminating in the Bill of Portland. Some of these cliffs are 700 or 800 feet high. Their charmingly varied hues, commencing with the dark blue of the lias at Lyme Regis, broken by slips of verdure, and clefts producing deep shadows, succeeded by the oolitic yellow or orange crests of Shorncliff and Golden Cap, whose sides bear little copses of dark fir, interspersed with purple heather and golden gorse, reflect themselves in a calm sea with the brilliancy of the rainbow, giving an Italian effect to the scenery.

As our eye follows the curve of coast beyond, we notice the red cliffs which mark the situation of Bridport and the fishing village of Burtan; and, subdued and harmonised by distance, the still receding heights beyond Abbotsbury fade away into an indefinite greenish blue, and terminate in the white rock of Portland, which lifts itself as a pale shadow in the far atmosphere.

We must add to our picture the bright blue waters of the Bay: these, sheltered from the east and north, and open only to the more genial influences (tempestuous though they sometimes be), of the south and west breezes, spread their wide expanse towards the bosom of the broad Atlantic unbroken by any intervening land; and whether tossed into wavelets flecked with innumerable white crests, or still and glassy with a mother-of-pearl iridescence on their surface, add the charm of incessant change to the exquisite colouring.

Standing on the verdant summit of Black Venn, one of the heights I have been describing, between Lyme and Charmouth, in the calm soft light of a summer sunset, a spectator, versed in the local records of the neighbourhood, finds an additional interest in the recollection that the sea and landscape, on which the eye now rests in admiration, presented the identical appearance in hue and outline to the Northern Sea Kings when, ten centuries ago, our Saxon progenitors watched from these heights the robber fleets, sweeping, beneath their banners, towards the adjacent village of Charmouth, and landing their fierce warriors with the raven standard unfurled, to ravage the interior with fire and sword.

Possessed of still greater interest is the reflection that at a much more remote epoch, while the earth was yet a desolate wilderness and man was as yet uncreated to inhabit, cultivate, and subdue, beneath and over these very cliffs, and amid the surrounding ooze, there swarmed countless multitudes of monstrous forms; giants in magnitude, and of great muscular development, endued with the most fearful powers of destruction and rapacity; creatures whose very analogy is in some cases scarcely traceable at the present day, but who then held undisputed sway over that dreary region, the theatre of their internecine war, and ultimately their sepulchre.

The stony skeletons of these monsters, daily disinterred by the pickaxe of the workman, or the hammer of the geologist, attest the unquestionable facts of their animal organisation, even to minute details, details which have enabled us to establish conclusions respecting the condition of the world which they inhabited, as accurate as if we had ourselves been then in existence, with every faculty for observation and personal investigation. A series of inferences, the result of a train of masterly reasoning, supports these conclusions, and stamps with authenticity a very wonderful chapter in our readings from the book of Nature, of the goodness and superintending power of the Almighty Creator.

CHAPTER II. SUPERNATURAL.

BUT the glimmer of the revolving light on the distant Isle of Portland, and the brighter sparkle of the town lamps in the valley remind us of the necessity for our homeward journey, and we therefore commence our descent. The road we are taking towards the town from the hill on the Charmouth side is beautifully diversified; and the dark pine wood, which at some little distance borders it upon our right, calls up a reminiscence of so strange a character, that I think it worth presenting to the reader.

About six years ago I was coming to Lyme Regis by this very road from Charmouth, where I had been engaged until a late hour on professional business. It might have been about eleven o'clock as I reached the gap known by the name of the Devil's Bellowa, a few hundred yards beyond which, is the crown of the hill overlooking a long strip of the undulating and winding road towards Lyme. Below this part of the road is the cliff called "Black Venn." The night was a bright summer moonlight, almost as clear as day.

From this point the road, with all its turns and hollows, can be seen for the distance of nearly half a mile; and the dark woods on the right which border it to some distance, and out of which it seems to take its rise, rendered its yellow line still more conspicuous by the contrast on such a night.

I had scarcely reached this point when I was startled by a loud but distant scream, or rather a succession of screams, of a peculiarly wild and wailing character.

As nearly as I could judge, the sounds came from the pine wood, at the extremity of the road. I stopped to listen, and strained my eyes in the direction from which the screams appeared to come; and there,—just where the road emerges from the darkness of the wood, I distinctly saw something white, gleaming and glancing in the moonlight, and evidently in ceaseless and violent motion. My first idea was that two persons, clothed in white, were struggling, as if engaged in a contest for life and death: but after gazing for a minute or two, I became aware that the figure or figures, whichever it might be, had subsided into one, and that one was rapidly moving towards me!

The screams were now incessant, resembling more the shrieks and howlings of a wild beast in

pain, than the tones of the human voice under any conceivable circumstances.

You will readily suppose that I could not withdraw my eyes from the strange white figure, which emitting these most fearful shrieks, was now swiftly traversing the road in my direction, first down the little hollow at the foot of the fir wood, then over the strip of level ground near the gate which leads to a foot path through fields into Lyme, and at length up the very acclivity on which I was standing.

I have often endeavoured to analyse the feelings I experienced on this occasion; but although much startled and surprised, I think the predominant sensation was that of curiosity at the un-

earthly sounds. If these hideous outcries uttered by the figure at a distance had startled and surprised me, the figure itself, as it approached, occasioned me still greater perplexity.

Imagine for yourself, in the clear moonlight, a spinning, whirling and shrieking creature, making swift progress, with motionless, outstretched arms like those of a huge white scare-crow, extended at right angles with the body. The figure was of a tall man's height, clothed in something which appeared to me like a gown or waggoner's frock, of white material, falling in one long droop to the ground! The extended arms were also of the same light colour.

The head of the figure I could not distinguish,



for (strange to say) the creature, of whatever nature it was, engaged in this nightly ramble, advanced in a series of whirls, so rapid as to defy my attempts, as it speeded past me, to catch even a glimpse of its features. It combined with this eccentric movement, so swift an onward progress, that, as nearly as I could judge, the whole space of time, from the moment when it first came in sight, to that in which it disappeared from my view, having traversed in that period a distance of at least half a mile, did not exceed a very few minutes. Its shrieks, as it passed close by me, keeping the centre of the road, were horrifying in the extreme; and rang in my ears long after it had disappeared in the direction of the Devil's Bellows.

I cannot say that I felt anything like what I should imagine would attend a supernatural mani-

festation. My sensations were chiefly those of surprise, and I had even prepared myself for the possibility of self-defence in case the figure, if human, should attack me, in what seemed the unrestrained outbreak of some ferocious and irclaimable maniac! This idea flashed across my mind as the only possible solution; and I anticipated that, on the following day, I should find that the whole neighbourhood had been alarmed, and that, in some way or other, the mystery would be cleared up.

No such elucidation, however, took place; nor could I ever learn that any one but myself had been favoured with a manifestation of this frantic and fantastic apparition.

During the whole of the subsequent week I passed the time in a state of bewilderment. What

I had seen and heard was continually recurring to my mind, and I puzzled myself in vain to account for the apparition. All my consideration served only the more to perplex me. One of the circumstances which occasioned me the greatest surprise in my reflections on the matter was, that so far as I could discover, no one but myself had heard the startling cries, or seen the unearthly figure, the former having been first heard by me at the distance of nearly half a mile, and the latter having passed along the turnpike road, on a night as bright as midday, in the close vicinity of two well populated towns; and even the turnpike-house—though not visible from where I stood—was certainly not five minutes' sharp walking distant from the copee whence the figure at first appeared to emerge; while the shrieks and screams were loud enough to have been heard in that still night as far as the town itself. And yet no one had heard them!

As I mentioned the circumstance to everybody that I could get to listen to it, in the hope of finding some one who could throw some light on the matter, it is not surprising that several persons should have reminded me of the well-known circumstance that a waggoner had, some years before, had his brains dashed out when passing incautiously behind his load of timber, some of which projected beyond the waggon, and struck him on the head, and that this death occurred exactly at that spot on the road near the copee where the hideous figure I had seen first appeared to me.

Neither need it be doubted that many of these intelligent listeners left me with the full persuasion that I had seen the ghost of the unhappy waggoner dancing a supernatural polka, to an extempore air of his own composition, on the spot where he had left his brains.

One fact alone I obtained worth recording, which trivial as it may appear, and lightly as I then regarded it, will probably, to the philosophic reader, be found of some significance; and let any one who thinks it worth his while to follow me to the end of the story bear it in mind.

Among those to whom I mentioned the affair was the inspecting commander of the coast-guard on this station, a gentleman of much resolution and experience, with whom I had the pleasure of an acquaintance.

He heard my story with much interest, and remarked upon its singularity, adding, that, for some time past, he had observed a great reluctance on the part of his men to visit the stations on that beat; that they always applied to be sent in couples; and although he had not deemed it advisable to take notice of the fact, he had heard rumours of their having been terrified by unusual sights and sounds on those eastward cliffs. From the men, however, I could obtain nothing but evasive and unsatisfactory answers to my questions on the subject, and the result was that the mystery remained entirely unsolved.

CHAPTER III. HYPOTHETICAL.

COURTEOUS reader, we are now about to part company, and I would fain leave upon your mind the impression that the last twenty minutes have been passed in the society of an honest and

veracious narrator, to whom you may safely give implicit credence.

This character you say you are readily prepared to allow me, provided that I, on my part, and as a condition precedent, will prove myself worthy of the confidence reposed in me, by at once explaining fully and satisfactorily the circumstances I have related.

Alas! I regret to say that I am unable to secure my good character on these terms, for the simple reason that up to this moment no such full and sufficient explanation has been afforded me. But if you, most searching of cross-examiners, will proceed to inquire whether any idea has presented itself to my mind, by which so singular a phenomenon might possibly be brought within the compass of rationality, I will own that (oddly enough) after several months of perplexity a few words spoken by one whom, to the best of my knowledge, I had never before seen—whose voice I had never before heard, and shall in all probability never hear again, and with whose name I am unacquainted—threw suddenly a faint gleam over what had before been utterly obscure, and suggested the clue to a plausible solution of the problem. It might have been about seven or eight months after the event that I have related, that I was returning from the County Court at Arminster, late on a dark winter evening, and walking my horse up the hill which leads from that town to Hunter's Lodge, when I was suddenly accosted by a man who appeared to have overtaken me, and who, touching his hat, seemed desirous of entering into conversation.

After a few remarks, he said: "Would your honour like to buy some good brandy?" On this strange question being put to me, I stopped my horse, and turning to the man, said: "Do you know, my friend, that you are putting a question which may get you into difficulty? How do you know but that I am a policeman or an excise-man?"

To this the man replied that he knew I was neither the one nor the other; that he well knew who I was, and entertained no apprehension of risk in making the inquiry; then drawing nearer, and assuming a very confidential manner, he assured me I might rely on the article being of the best description without the least smack of sea water, and that he would be able to procure me any quantity I might wish for within a day or two; "For," added he, in conclusion, "we last week made a capital run just under Black Venn."

Dear reader: If this little episode does not furnish you, as it did me, with some elucidation both of the brainless Waggoner's Polka and of the nocturnal terrors which appear to have successfully scared the coast guard, your imagination is a less vivid one than I am willing to give you credit for possessing. For my own part, I will only add, that the mention of the singular name "Black Venn" (recalling, as it instantly did, the adventure of my moonlight walk), coupled with the accommodating proposal of my unknown friend, suggested to me the hypothesis, that the apparition was probably not a messenger from the spirit world, although in close connection with the world of spirits.

LAST WEEK.

THE Road murder at home, and the Italian question abroad under yet another of its many aspects,—such, in a word, are the points which remained mainly under discussion LAST WEEK. This autumn has been singularly barren of suggestions for the forthcoming session. There has not been a “recess” since the famous one of 1845, when the Irish famine was a-foot, and the announcement appeared in the “Times,” which fell like a shell in the camp of the Protectionists, during which we have not had something more than an inkling of what would happen when Parliament assembled. But now, what is there to be done, or what to be talked about? Of the Reform Bill there seems to be as absolute an end as though a revival of the settlement of 1831-2 had never been in contemplation. Mr. Bright may intend retirement from public life for aught the public have known of his proceedings during the last few months. Lord Derby, on the other hand, has been afflicted with severe illness—and it would almost seem as though ere long the marshal’s *bâton* of the Conservative army would be within the grasp of the first comer. We have not even had the usual crop of autumnal speeches from honourable gentlemen who go down to their constituents to render up an account of their stewardships. Lord Palmerston, to be sure, has been making a memorable progress in the Northern counties, and conciliating to himself the good-will of all men with whom he came into contact. Lord Stanley has been propounding a lecture upon education, which contained a vast amount of good sense, and consequently gave considerable offence to the education doctors. This day week the Duke of Argyll delivered an address to the Associated Mechanics’ Institute of Lancashire and Cheshire, upon the same subject. The inference as to the amount of political excitement in this country is obvious enough.

For it cannot be denied that, although the education of its children is amongst the most important affairs which can occupy the attention of a nation, here with us in England it is just the scapegoat which we drive into the wilderness when there is nothing better forthcoming. When there is nothing else to discuss—and not till then—we discuss what is called this great social problem. No doubt, as a nation, we have not discharged this particular duty to the full extent of our obligation. Whoever has practically concerned himself with the working out of any particular system which may have been established either in town or country, is soon, however, made painfully aware of the fact that the great hindrance to education in these islands is the necessity under which the children of the poor are placed of earning their own livelihood even from their earliest years. It is this which is the real stumbling-block in the way—far more than indifference—far more than religious bitterness, and the frenzies of sectarianism. The poor are well aware of the benefits which their children would derive from education, even of the most elementary kind, but as soon as the little hands can work, to work they must be set. As far as theological objections are concerned, the evil to a great extent works its own

cure. Father O’Toole objects to little Romanist Paddy’s initiation in the “rudiments” in a mixed school. Of course that eminent divine is bound to provide him with “some” kind of learning in a sheepfold where Protestant wolves or ushers cannot break in and tamper with the purity of the young gentleman’s faith. All this is as it must be, but the fact remains that our great statesmen never trouble themselves much about the education of the people as long as there is any other subject upon which they can fall out with their rivals.

In point of fact, the editors of our newspapers—until the Chinese letter of LAST WEEK—have been living upon the Italian news, the Syrian massacres, the Prince of Wales’s visit to Canada and the States, and the desperate catalogue of murders with which we have been afflicted during the last few months. Beyond this we find them having recourse to blue-books, and old official returns, from which, in some fashion or another, the essence is extracted, and, when duly spiced and perfumed, it is served up as an entirely novel article.

The legend of the Irish Brigade was a piece of unexpected good fortune, and it was made the most of. Who could have anticipated that even Ireland would have gone into rags for the few Irishmen who were scathed by the hand of the foeman during that brief campaign of Lamoricière’s? An ordinary cricket-match would have supplied well-nigh as numerous and as considerable a list of casualties; but for these *Te Deums* were sung, and holy men have waved their pots of incense in ecstasies of thanksgiving. It has indeed been suggested that all this incense-burning, and hymn-chanting, and scattering of laurel and cypress over half-a-dozen sprained ankles and contused knees must be taken to have represented nothing more than the extreme anxiety of the Irish Romanist Clergy to get the legion dispersed to their respective homes before they had time to marshal their grievances collectively before the faithful.

How desperate an awakening to those poor Irish peasants who were accustomed to regard the system of priestly government with what is called the “eye of faith,” must not that brief visit to the Pontifical States have proved! If the meanest hind of Tipperary or Clare could have had an idea of the condition of the Roman peasantry, and, possibly, still worse, of the poorer Roman citizens, he would have been well content to stay at home, with even the eventualities of another failure in the potato crop staring him in the face. But when to the ordinary and normal miseries of a Papal subject are added the discomforts and sufferings of a foreign mercenary hiring himself out to be drilled by Lamoricière’s,—to be justly execrated by the people, whom he was there to oppress,—and to be shot by Cialdini’s men, unless his discretion should outstrip his valour, it is not to be wondered at if an Irish legionary wished himself back in the juiciest recess of a Kerry bog, rather than in a Roman garrison-town. These poor wretches must have had enough to tell, if their tongues had not been stopped in a very effective way by the Irish priests at their landing. Dr. Cullen has converted

the miserable runaways into heroes, if not to the satisfaction of Europe, at least in a manner which may serve the turn amongst their own Hibernian cognates and agnates. He has embalmed them as it were, and consigned them to the odour of sanctity; with what ill-grace would a mutiny arise amidst this noble army of martyrs! If they speak the truth, or even breathe a suggestion of the truth, they will not only become hateful to the particular Father O'Flaherty who directs public opinion in their own immediate neighbourhood, but they will make themselves supremely ridiculous. Now, whatever an Irishman's faults may be, he has at least a keen sense of the ludicrous. To fall from the high position of a glorious and sacred martyr *in posse*, who had gone forth to shed his blood for the true faith, to that of a discontented, scourged, and wretched recruit—the dupe of a priestly Sergeant Kite—is a consummation from which the majority of the Holy Band will probably shrink. Meanwhile they have done what they can to make the name of their country a bye-word in Europe.

Of the investigation which is now going on at Road under the auspices of Mr. Saunders, a county magistrate, there is little to be said, and that little not of a very favourable kind. The investigation will probably serve to put—or rather to keep—the murderers still more on their guard, and certainly from the manner in which it is conducted is not likely to throw much light upon the mystery. It is clear enough that when the first twenty-four hours after the murder were allowed to slip by without any progress towards the discovery of the real culprits, their chances of immunity increased from day to day almost in geometrical progression. The real policy then was one of inaction. The great point was to throw them off their guard; and this was the more advisable inasmuch as the number of persons upon whom the surveillance of the police should have been directed did not exceed six in all. As it is, the caution of these six persons has been constantly and continuously kept awake by one clumsy investigation after another. By this time they are perfectly aware that all they have to do is to adhere to the story that they were fast asleep from midnight, or thereabouts, on the fatal night, until six or seven A.M., and who is to prove that they were awake? There can be no danger in repeating this here, because it has been so often and so forcibly impressed upon the minds of all concerned, when they were examined before the magistrates as witnesses, or accused as suspected persons. As matters stand at present, there must be some miracle of imprudence, as in the case of that wretched creature Mullins, who deliberately tied the halter round his own neck, when he might have gone to his grave without molestation from human justice if he had not tried to make a secure position too secure. There is, of course, the chance that the fortitude of one of the parties to the deed—if indeed there were more than one—may give way. There is the chance that the knife with which the wounds were inflicted may turn up, or some rag or material clue to the murderer's horrid mystery.

Such a solution of the enigma, however, will

more probably be the result of chance than of any persevering effort to get upon the right track. The task of discovering the true actors in this dreadful tragedy should be intrusted to some one amongst the "detectives," who is as much superior to his fellows in the special faculty of "detection," as a good detective is superior in this respect to ordinary mortals. It would be necessary that such an one should fairly match his mind against the minds of the murderers; and that the shadow of his presence should be on them by day and by night, even when he was actually absent from them. He should incorporate himself as it were in their thoughts, so that sleeping or waking they should feel the Avenger was upon their track, and would not be balked of his prey. Sooner or later they must give way, and if women are "in it," as the phrase is, they must at length be wearied out, and seek relief from an acknowledgment of the crime. The clumsy disturbance, however, which Mr. Saunders is raising at Road cannot be productive of any favourable result.

There is little to be added to the article upon our relations with China, published three weeks ago in ONCE A WEEK, in consequence of the recent intelligence. That the Chinese would make a stout stand at the Taku Forts, but that they would be shelled and tormented out of them after a brief onset by the superior military skill and armaments of the Europeans, was obvious enough. We were not quite prepared for the desperate character of the resistance, for it certainly seems as though the Tartar soldiers fought upon this occasion, as soldiers owing allegiance to the Emperor of China never fought before. What might not be done with such men if they had the advantages of a good drill, a plentiful supply of Enfield rifles, and instruction how to use them! On the whole, we should rejoice that this is so, for all that we want with China and the Chinese is freedom of commercial intercourse, and security for as many of the Queen's subjects as may find it for their advantage to push their fortunes in that remote country. The stronger the government of China is, and the more capable Chinese troops are of holding their own consistently with this condition, the better for us. We, who want only to exchange the manufactures of the British Islands against the products of China, can have no desire to see this huge empire kept in a perpetual state of civil broil. Neither would it be for our profit that any other nation, Russia, or the United States, for example, should make territorial acquisitions in China.

China for the Chinese, and intercourse with China for all the world to the advantage of all parties concerned, is all that we desire. It seems to be doubted by those who have a good right to express an opinion upon such a point, if Lord Elgin and his French colleague in diplomacy have taken the best way to secure a permanent peace. It is said that they should have advanced to Peking, not at the head of a guard of honour, even though composed of European troops, but with so large a portion of the forces at their disposal, that even the stupidest of the Peking burghers must have awakened to the consciousness that the old Mandarin government had received a signal defeat.

and that the shadow of its power had passed away. The conclusion is perhaps premature, although it is not unnatural that the persons who have been the actual witnesses of previous diplomatic failures in the same quarter of the globe should be swift to anticipate a fresh blunder. The well-nigh universal impression LAST WEEK seems to have been that Lord Elgin would end by adding yet another to the many diplomatic failures which have distinguished our negotiations with the Chinese Court. A joint occupation with our French allies of the Taku Ports, or some other locality easy of access from the sea, and offering every facility for reaching Peking in a very brief space of time, should further difficulties occur, would seem to be the easiest method of obtaining security for the future; and of economising not only our own blood and treasure, but the ves and the money of our semi-barbarous opponents. Whatever the result of Lord Elgin's diplomatic efforts may be, it is quite clear that Sir Hope Grant, in the course of his stern negotiations with the defenders of the Taku Ports, has proved to conviction that the Armstrong gun is the most fearful and destructive weapon ever yet brought into the field. It seems, indeed, difficult to understand how two European armies, each possessed of a sufficient number of these guns, and with the skill to use them, could sustain each other's presence at all for a quarter of an hour, or even for a less period of time. It would be on a larger scale the story of two duellists, each armed with a first-rate duelling pistol—each hair trigger set—and each muzzle applied to the brow of each combatant. There would just be a little smoke—a flash—a report—and the end.

It is the fashion to say that as weapons of offence are constructed on more and more fatal principles, the chances of war will decrease. Some centuries have elapsed since our ancestors fought with bows and arrows, and drove chariots, armed with scythes, over their battle-fields—and we are now fighting with Enfield rifles and Armstrong guns. If we look at the history of Asia and Europe for the last few years, there does not appear to be any sensible diminution in the combative propensities of the human race. The Crimea—India—Lombardy, afford strange illustrations of the growth of the more benevolent feeling amongst the children of the great human family.

But when all is said that can be said of the Chinese news of LAST WEEK—of the Armstrong guns—of the Road murder—of the delay in our young Prince's return from beyond the Atlantic—of the follies of the Irish Brigade,—and other scraps and parcels of intelligence of more or less importance, every one knows that the chief point for our consideration is whether the Italian question is to receive a peaceful settlement, or whether Europe is to be plunged again into a series of hostilities. Of course, in our time, the nations of Europe cannot remain at war with one another for a quarter of a century. The fate of kingdoms and empires will be decided henceforward in short and bloody campaigns.

Now, the intelligence from Italy, of LAST WEEK, is of a doubtful complexion—not as far as sub-

stantive results are concerned—but if we look to the chances of a permanent solution of the question. The French Emperor has been fairly foiled in the game of stratagem. He has been as much outwitted by the Italians as he himself outwitted the dull young Emperor of Austria at Villafranca. His idea was that of a federal Italy, that is to say, of an Italy divided into various provinces, each one under the influence of petty jealousies and petty ambition. Of such a confederation the French Emperor, who had borne a large share in driving the Austrians out of Lombardy, and without whose help, indeed, such a result could never have been accomplished, was the natural protector and master. The suzerainty of Italy would have passed from Austria into French hands; at the same time Louis Napoleon would have maintained his pretension in the eyes of the European nations to be considered the liberator of that beautiful land. How all his schemes and projects have been dissipated into empty air by the fortitude, energy, and patriotism of the Italians, the world knows. Instead of a divided, helpless Italy—an Italy relying upon his protection from day to day to secure her against fresh aggression from Austria—Louis Napoleon now sees a country rising into strength and independence—next neighbour to France—and which, in a short time, will be in a condition to contest with her maritime dominion in the Mediterranean. If Italy is to be independent, he will demand material guarantees that her newly-won independence shall not be used against the ambition of France. At the same time the tone of all the European powers, when he insisted in so forcible a manner upon the surrender of Nice and Savoy as the price of the assistance he afforded the Italians during the Lombardy campaign, and of the threatening attitude which he still maintains against Austria, was not such as to encourage the supposition that they would stand by tamely, and witness fresh acquisitions of territory by France. There is his dilemma. A feeling is growing up in France—a feeling far beyond his control—that the existence of a great Mediterranean power, such as an independent Italy certainly would prove, is a fresh element in European diplomacy, and that of its future working, Frenchmen are unable to take accurate account. On the whole, it is exceedingly unlikely that united Italy, under the sceptre of Victor Emmanuel, or of that gracious young Prince Humbert, of whom we heard the other day, would consent to act as the satellite of France. In the first place, France and Italy would stand to each other in a false position. From the recent course of events France would be apt to make too great claims upon the gratitude of Italy; Italy might be disposed to deny her obligations, and to maintain that whatever Louis Napoleon had done for her was the result rather of state-policy than of any sentimental sympathy with the miseries of the Italians. In the next place, the Government of Italy will certainly be conducted on very different principles from those which are considered by the French Emperor as necessary for the security of his dynasty. When he seized the reins of government with so forcible a hand some eight years ago, France—not unmindful of his past history—was shuddering at

what might happen if the Faubourgs were again to win the upper hand in Paris. France was sick of revolutions, and of the licentiousness of liberty. What she asked was to be guarded against the excesses of the popular principle. It was considered—let us travel back in thought to the beginning of the year 1853—that under the rule of Louis XVIII., of Charles X., and of Louis Philippe, the experiment of popular government had been fairly tried in France, and had resulted in a miserable failure. If the choice was to be between Anarchy and the Iron Hand, the deliberate choice of Frenchmen was in favour of the man who would ensure them against the results of 1792-93, and the possibilities of June, 1848. The rule of Louis Napoleon, which now partly rests upon habit and custom, in the first instance represented the apprehensions of the French nation in presence of an ascertained past and an unascertained future. If their Emperor, without increasing the financial burdens of the nation in too great a degree, can add a few more names to those which are already engraved on the triumphal arch at the *Barrière de l'Etoile*, so much the better. A purple rag and a successful tattoo are never very displeasing objects to a Frenchman's mind.

Compare the moral conditions under which Italy is winning her way to independence with those which actually obtain in France. In the first place, they are not the excesses of liberty, but the excesses of despotism which are ever present as the bugbears of the Italian mind. An Italian matron thinks of her boy laid low by an Austrian firing party at Ferrara; an Italian wife still mourns over her husband who was buried alive for years, without trial, in the dungeons of the priests at Rome, and whom she never saw again; an Italian daughter weeps for her father who lived to suffer with Pœrio, but who did not survive to triumph with Garibaldi. These feelings are deeply engraved into the hearts of the Italian people. When the popular party gained the upper-hand at Rome, at Venice, at Milan, and, for a brief space, at Naples, with the exception of the assassination by the mob of a single ruffian at Parma, the other day, what is there to regret? No one would for a moment defend the murder of Rossi a bit more than he would defend the attempt made, some two years ago, by Felice Orsini against the life of the French Emperor; but when this took place the priests were yet in power, and Rome was not under a popular government. It might also be said that when the people had gained a momentary supremacy they were so constantly under fire, that they had not the time, or opportunity, even if they had had the intention, for massacre and plunder. This is beside the purpose of the argument. The fact remains that the Italians have not any traditions of the guillotine and of revolutionary frenzy to forget. They may aspire to liberty, for they have never abused it. We may feel reasonably certain that if the Austrian war-cloud is dissipated, and Italy becomes constituted into a kingdom, the government will be directed essentially upon constitutional maxims.

There will be the three forms of liberty which are essential to the well-being and growth of a nation; liberty of speech in Parliament, liberty of speech at the bar, liberty of printed speech, or in other words, liberty of the press. There is, on the one hand, a vast amount of intelligence scattered about amongst the urban population of Italy; and, on the other, quite a sufficient pressure of adverse circumstances to prevent the Italians from degenerating into a nation of babblers and dreamers. Now, when we see with what extreme impatience Louis Napoleon regards the freedom of debate and discussion in Belgium, a country of which he may covet the possession, but which does not directly thwart his schemes of ambition, it may not unfairly be inferred that he would not regard the development of liberty in the Italian peninsula with any peculiar satisfaction. May there not come a moment when Frenchmen may say, "After all, are we not as good as the Italians whom we have helped to redeem from slavery with our blood, and with our treasure? Are we not to the full as much worth as the Belgians, whose highest boast it is to be imperfect Frenchmen?" With a constitutional Italy upon one side of France, and a constitutional Belgium upon the other (to make no mention of the Kingdom of the Netherlands), Louis Napoleon could scarcely maintain his system of government, which necessarily involves the repression of all expression—if not of the pressure—of public opinion. Surely such phrases as those which embodied the noble protest made LAST WEEK by M. Berryer against the subjection of the French bar must find an echo in many a French heart. The government of Louis Napoleon and of Victor Emmanuel must certainly be conducted on different principles; and thus there arises a danger to the French Emperor, which would in the long run probably prove more fatal to him than any direct and material danger which he would incur from the entire and immediate liberation of Italy. At the present moment the belief is amongst many who make politics their trade, that he looks with an evil and grudging eye upon such an event as the complete independence of Italy, unless accompanied by a fresh cession of territory to France. The Genoese sailors would prove a far more useful addition to the navy, even than were the Savoyard soldiers to the army of France. These are men of very different mould to the hybrid mixture of soldier and sailor, which is warmed into a state of half efficiency by the rigour of the French law of maritime conscription. Your Genoese is a Jack Tar in the proper acceptation of the word, and would prove a very acceptable addition to the cadres of the French navy. Meanwhile Capua has fallen. Before these lines are published, the young ex-King of the Two Sicilies will probably have fled from Gaeta, and Victor Emmanuel and his advisers will be able to turn their attention to the northern region of the new kingdom of Italy, unless Louis Napoleon should transmit fresh orders to General Goyon at Rome. If Italy be independent in the long run, and without fresh territorial concession to France, Louis Napoleon will be what he has not often been—a dupe.

THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.



CHAPTER V.

As if by tacit understanding, the friends spoke no more on the subject nearest their hearts. During the short drive back to the lodge, Arthur Lygon was mentally occupied in reviewing such incidents of his early life as he could upon the moment summon to his recollection, but, as usual, memory, often so unwelcomely pertinacious in voluntarily presenting her panorama, painted with pitiless exactness, would, when peremptorily called upon, yield up little but disjointed fragments, recurring again and again like the *ægri somnia*. Nevertheless, his strong consciousness that there was nothing which he could in reason charge against himself as a wrong to his wife, afforded to Lygon an honest consolation, though that conviction in no degree tended to diminish the mystery that lay before him. It was perhaps for the best that Mr. Berry had guided the husband's thoughts in a given direction, and concentrated them, for the time at least, within a certain limit, for nothing perhaps is more prostrating to the courage of the mind than its being incessantly sent forth in pursuit of a phantom enemy. In the meantime, Mr. Berry's own thoughts had to pursue a far subtler and more dangerous track, and the manifestation which Arthur Lygon had made of an earnest and loyal faith in her whom he had lost, impressed his friend more and more

deeply each time he recurred to it with a sense of the terrible consequences that would attend a false step on the part of his adviser.

His adviser made one false step at the very threshold, for he permitted Mr. Lygon, unsupported, to encounter a lady whose suspicious and jealous nature had already made her half an enemy, and who needed but little provocation to become a determined though undeclared one. Mr. Berry set down Arthur at the porch, and drove round to the stables.

Clara was with Mrs. Berry in the dining-room, the little girl having, much to her unexpressed discontent, been withdrawn from the pleasures of the garden, and set down, in a half-darkened apartment, to amuse herself with the pictures in Fox's Book of Martyrs. Privately, Clara probably considered herself entitled to a place in the collection.

Mrs. Berry was about to rise and question Lygon as to what he had done, and get him to commit himself before Mr. Berry's arrival. Then it occurred to her to use a proxy to entrap him.

"There is your papa, Clara! Run and ask him whether he has sent off his message all right."

Too happy to escape the fires of Smithfield and their distorted occupants, Clara bounded away to her father, and asked the question.

"All right, love," returned Mr. Lygon, kissing her. "And what have you been doing?"

"O, nothing," replied Clara, in anything but a tone of pleasure.

"She said that you had particularly desired her, when on the hill, to keep out of the sun," said Mrs. Berry, as they entered, "and therefore I presumed that I should be acting in accordance with your wishes in detaining her in the house."

Poor Clara! She had little thought, when rattling out her hill experiences, before chilled down by Mrs. Berry and Mr. Fox, that her casual mention of her papa's hint was to be made a solemn justification for spoiling her afternoon. But this was one of Mrs. Berry's habitual unfairnesses to helpless persons. That form of cowardly unkindness is one of the earliest shocks which children undergo, and by no means the lightest. I am far from sure that the shabby woman who decoys a child up an alley and steals its shoes, does not deserve a mouth less at hard labour than her well-dressed sister who steals a child's confidences, and rolls them up into a stone to smite it.

"You found the person at the Marfield telegraph intelligent, I hope?" said Mrs. Berry, pointedly.

"I thought over the business again, during the drive," said Mr. Lygon, "and came to the conclusion that the message would do as well in a letter."

"Oh! then you did not go to Marfield," said Mrs. Berry. She would have liked to ascertain more, but time was precious. "Then I will get you the writing-case, so that the letter may be dispatched by our boy, who goes into Liphthwaite at five o'clock."

She hastened from the room, and her knowledge of the localities enabled her to intercept Mr. Berry as he came from the stables.

"Oh! you here!" she said. "Why did not you let Sykes take the chaise round?"

"I didn't see Sykes."

"Mr. Lygon told Clara that he sent off his message all right," said Mrs. Berry.

"What was the good of his telling her that?" thought the lawyer; who, being out of business, was now opposed to all unnecessary falsifications. "Well, my dear," he said, "is it any such feat of genius to dispatch a telegraphic message?"

"I do not know why you cannot answer me without a sneer, Mr. Berry. Is there anything unreasonable in my being interested in what your friend does?"

"Quite the reverse, my dear," said her husband, endeavouring to come into the house. "Your attention is extremely hospitable, and I hope that your dinner, by-and-by, will be equally worthy of your estimable character."

Now, Mrs. Berry could with pleasure have fired a hot shot in reply to this, but as she would have gained nothing thereby, she reserved her fire, and only said—

"I dare say that the dinner will be satisfactory. Mr. Berry, and if I mentioned the telegraph, I suppose that after the intimation I ventured to give in reference to Mrs. Letts, my presumption is not unpardonable."

"My dear, your expenditure of syllables is

almost an extravagance," said Mr. Berry, coolly, making his way past her not very exuberant form, and going into the house.

She was not generous, but she would willingly have given a not very small sum of money to have obtained from Mr. Berry a distinct statement that the message had been dispatched. For during the absence of her husband and Mr. Lygon she had accidentally mentioned their errand to a tradesman to whom she had been speaking in the kitchen, and he had expressed regret that the gentlemen should have gone to Marfield, as the telegraph instrument there had been out of order for some days, and the people were coming from London to repair it on Saturday.

Not that Mr. Berry would have very much cared about being confronted with this kind of contradiction, for after an endeavour of some years to make her as frank and free-spoken as himself, and after many efforts to rout out all her nests and treasures of petty mysteries, and to let in the sunshine of perfect matrimonial trust and confidence, he had given up the game, allowing the thin lips to speak or be silent, as they pleased; and for his own part, he had dropped into the habit of telling her, as he said, "as much truth as was good for her."

But she would have had a good *casus belli* against Mr. Lygon, whom she was learning to regard with very unfriendly eyes. However, she had got something yet, to make him uncomfortable with.

Mrs. Berry returned to the room, bringing the writing-case.

"There, Mr. Lygon, now you can write your letter, and the boy shall wait for it."

"Confound the woman, boring," was Mr. Lygon's savage remark to himself—a sort of words supposed to be about as often thought and as seldom uttered as any form of petition which has been devised for the use of man.

He dragged the note-paper before him, and was just going to write something, anything, to go off to town to a fellow employé,—it was less trouble than declining,—when the lady proceeded,

"And here, just direct this envelope for me. I must write a few words to Laura, assuring her that her little girl is all right and safe with me, and that the longer she stays the better. I forget what you called the place in Hertfordshire—Edgington, was it?"

She never forgot anything, and knew quite well that he had said Herefordshire and Long Edgcombe, but there was no trick here; it was simply that the lying woman was in the habit of lying plausibly.

"Thank you," said Mr. Lygon, kindly, while overflowing with sudden wrath and some apprehension at the proposed proceeding. "Yes, she will be glad to hear. And yet I hardly know whether you had better direct to the country, as there is a whole series of cross-poste, and there is no saying when she will get the letter."

"Well, it is only a penny, if it follows her back to London," said Mrs. Berry, "and the chance of her hearing is worth that. I have been a mother, Mr. Lygon, and I know what it is to have news of one's children in absence."

Arthur Lygon, in no respect softened by this

appeal, did not exactly see his way to parry the demand, and wrote upon the envelope, "Mrs. Lygon, Long Edgecombe, Herefordshire."

"Won't you put Mrs. Eatoncamp's name? We country people like that done."

"Mrs. Eatoncamp?" replied Arthur. And it occurred to him, poor fellow, in his strait, that if he adopted that blunder, and the letter miscarried—

And he wrote "Mrs. Eatoncamp."

And if he had looked at Mrs. Berry at that moment, he would have seen a sudden light come into her light eyes. She knew well what name he had mentioned. And here he deliberately wrote another, one of her own supplying. Stop a moment! He and her husband had been whispering, for she had heard the child laughingly rebuke them. What did they whisper about? They started, at all events, saying they were going to Marfield, and the very next moment they drove off in another direction. Why did Mr. Lygon, who is foolishly confidential with that spoiled brat, tell her that his telegraph-message was all right, and why did Mr. Berry leave me to imagine they had sent? Now—he does not want a letter sent to his wife, and he puts a false name on it. That light which Arthur Lygon did not see in her light eyes was the flash of the powder on which the spark had fallen. "They are keeping a secret of some kind from me," said Mrs. Berry's thin lips, inaudibly. "Let me see how long they will keep it."

And it was not with the sweetest expression in her face that she left the room to write her letter, though her high voice became almost caressing as she bade Arthur make haste over his despatch, and she would say everything that was kind for him to Laura.

Into the library hastened Mrs. Berry, for she was a practical woman, and knew where to look for knowledge, which is the next best thing to having knowledge. A Gazetteer was open before her in a minute.

"No such place," she said, again looking at the envelope. "But then it may be a small place, not worth mentioning." You see, she wished for a conclusion, but did not jump at it, which shows that she would never have made a good interpreter of the prophecies.

"Looking out a very gigantic polysyllable for our discomfiture, my dear?" said Mr. Berry, who was at the window. "That's not the dictionary."

"I believe I know a dictionary as well as yourself," said his wife, repressing any more tart rejoinder. "But I never know where to find your books. Is there any book here that tells of small places, not important enough for maps and gazetteers?"

"There's Pigott," said Mr. Berry, "those large red volumes on your left. They mention every hole and corner in the kingdom. What county do you want?"

"Devonshire," said Mrs. Berry.

"Well, you'll see the name on the back," said her husband as he left the room.

No Long Edgecombe in Herefordshire, nor, though Mrs. Berry took the trouble to go quite

through the lists, was there among the Nobility, Gentry, or Clergy, such a name as Lygon had given her.

"They are playing tricks with me," said Mrs. Berry, feeling herself personally wronged, and trying a mental examination of the enemy's position, in order to see what could be done in the way of revenge.

Now, people who call themselves practical will probably say—

"I have no patience with the woman."

Now that is wrong, to begin with. We are bound to have patience with everybody, and especially with women.

"I should like to take her by the shoulders and—"

Stop again. That would be rude and coarse. The man who lays his hand upon a woman, save in— For shame! Must a player be called in with a clap-trap, to rebuke your violence?

"And say, 'Why, you meddling, spiteful old fool—'"

Exceptionable language, and one half of it unjust. Mrs. Berry was not five-and-forty, and was no fool.

"Your husband is a solicitor, and so is taken into people's confidence."

Mr. Berry has retired from practice, and has no more right to keep secrets from his wife than any other private gentleman.

"And what business have you to pry into his affairs?"

And you call yourself a practical person, and yet think that talking in that way to a shrewd, determined, venomous-minded woman of middle age will deter her from taking a course which I perceive by that recurrent light in her light eyes she intends to take, although at present she has no idea where it will lead her. Well, if it relieves your mind at this period of the history to say that you would like to shake Mrs. Berry by the shoulders, avail yourself of that relief. But be sure that her mind is made up for mischief, and a shake like that of the earthquake of Lisbon will never shake that resolve away from behind those light eyes.

Mrs. Berry took Arthur Lygon's letter from him—it was addressed to a friend in Somerset House, and she would have liked to open it, but there was but one kettle in the house, and that was in the kitchen, where the servants were too busy to be sent away while the lady should hold the letter in the steam. If he had sealed it, I think she would have kept it back for private examination, but as he had merely fastened it in the ordinary way, she let it go—the rather that as the boy was waiting, it was necessary to give him one letter, and she had no immediate intention of parting with Arthur's envelope. If she had performed upon the Somerset House letter the process which it is understood is very largely practised upon the epistolary literature of the time (and certainly the business of masters and mistresses is curiously familiar to their dependants in these days), the lady would have found only a scribbled request to a friend to order the double-ashed windows of the writer's office to be cleaned during his absence. That letter went, the writer

and the sender being mutually engaged in tricking each other. In very large machines there are very small wheels, and, mean as they are, the machinist who should leave them out might induce a crash among his grand works. And he who depicts the machine must show the little wheels as well as the rest, though it would be more dignified to draw only the majestic-moving pistons and the fiery fly-wheel.

Dinner passed over very quietly, and such conversation as arose was the result of effort. For Lygon, as may be imagined, was too full of his own great trouble, and was looking forward too eagerly to the revelation which Berry had promised him on the morrow, to have much animation to spare upon dinner-table commonplaces, of the kind that would be acceptable to Mrs. Berry. That lady, whose wrath did not require nursing to keep it warm—an educated woman's qualifications for making herself detestable being of course superior to those of a Scottish she-peasant—was sufficiently angular, incisive, and observant during the meal, but did not betray any overt hostility to any one. Indeed Clara, who was permitted to join her elders, rather benefitted by the situation of affairs, for Mrs. Berry, who would ordinarily, and in pursuance of her favourite tactics, have done the child what discomfort she could in the way of maternally checking, and the withholding anything Clara might be supposed especially to desire, chose to be gracious and even playful with her, and bestowed extra jam with the omelette, and a double libation of cream and sugar with the strawberries. The little girl, however, was not old enough to square the account, and to allow a person whom she instinctively disliked to bribe herself into Clara's good graces, as you and I, being rational people do. Nay did, only last week, when you yourself said to me, as we walked down to the Club from old Pinchbeck's, that certainly Pinchbeck was a coarse old beast, and as great an old fool as ever didn't understand a good story, but his dinner was a first-rate one, and the wine out-and-out, and I agreed with you that we would speak to some of the Committee, and try to get him in, if we could. But if we were not wiser than children, where would be the use of growing up?

The evening hung sadly on hand, in spite of the loveliness of the soft summer evening. The four wandered about the gardens, but no laugh woke the stillness of the place, and even Clara, subdued, laid her hand in her father's, paced silently by his side, and restrained her desire to go and sit on the little tree-bridge, and see the water dance in the moonlight.

Mrs. Berry returned to the house, on hearing that a visitor was in the drawing room.

When the gentlemen were summoned to tea, they found the mistress of the house, and the visitor. This was a somewhat malevolent-looking old lady in spectacles, who emitted a sort of grunt at Clara (as if the latter had done her some wrong in being so young, while the other was so old, a grievance a good deal felt by those who have made an unworthy use of life), and immediately told her to sit down and be quiet, the child having given no offence at all beyond what her presence

caused. On a small table lay open a map of Herefordshire.

"This is Aunt Empeon, Mr. Lygon. This is Mr. Lygon, aunt dear, who married Laura Vernon, you remember her?"

"I remember her," grunted Aunt Empeon. "She's grow'd older than when I know'd her. I hope she's grow'd more steadier."

"Mamma was always steady," was Clara's instant deliverance of reply.

Aunt Empeon looked evilly at the speaker, and but that Clara was protected would probably have called her to approach, and then pinched her.

"Quite right to stand up for mamma," said Mr. Lygon, who would himself have liked to say something offensive to the impertinent old woman, but did not see a gentlemanly opening. He was in no mood, by this time, to bear gratuitous annoyance.

"But speaking of mamma," said Mrs. Berry, in a loud and playful voice, "where is she? For aunt is a Herefordshire woman, and does not recollect the name of Long Edgcombe, and we can't find it in the map."

"No, really?" said Lygon, with a voice into which he certainly managed to throw an expression of extreme carelessness as to whether they could or could not. "Bad map, I suppose."

"A very good map, on the contrary," said Mrs. Berry.

"Then you don't look close enough, I suppose," returned Mr. Lygon, waxing still more angry as being tormented. "I can see it from here," he said, determined on a bold stroke, and half raising himself on the sofa to give a glance across at the map. "Let Aunt Empeon wipe her spectacles, and then she'll see more steadier. Ha! ha!"

It would have been dreadfully rude—was—but consider the provocation, and what Arthur Lygon was thinking of, while the women set upon him. Mrs. Berry was either repulsed, or felt a moment's respect for the enemy. Only a moment's.

"Clara, dear, come here."

O, she was not going to pinch the child.

"What was the name," she said, taking Clara's hand, "what was the name of the lady whom papa said that mamma was gone to see? Do you remember?"

"O yes," said Clara, "I remember it, because it is a funny name. It's like saying you had eaten a cat—it's Mrs. Cateaton."

"So it is," said Mrs. Berry. "I fancied we were wrong, somehow. That was not the name you put on the envelope for me, Mr. Lygon."

"Nonsense," said Arthur Lygon. "I sincerely beg your pardon a thousand times, Mrs. Berry; but the idea of my making a mistake in the name is too absurd."

"I am positive that you wrote something else."

"Not likely," said Mr. Berry, who had a shadow of a suspicion that Arthur might have been doing something to throw the amiable Marion off the scent. "We never make mistakes in our House, Arthur, do we?"

"We never allow them to be mistakes, the official gentleman."

"Not even when they are put under your eyes?" said Mrs. Berry, suddenly throwing a

envelope across to Arthur Lygon, who of course saw, as he knew he should see, "Eatoncamp" upon it.

"So you didn't write," he said, with admirable coolness. "You thought a mother's eagerness to have a letter could wait another post. Ha! ha! Mrs. Berry. However, it's lucky, as I made that curious muddle of the name. I believe, however, that the letter would have found Mrs. Lygon, just as well."

"So do I," said Mrs. Berry, in a slow, low voice.

CHAPTER VI.

ARCHIBALD VERNON, the father of Mrs. Lygon, was pleasantly settled in Liphthwaite, when Arthur Lygon was introduced to the family in which he found his beautiful wife. Into the circumstances which induced Mr. Vernon to take up his abode in Liphthwaite, it is not necessary at the present time to enter with any minuteness; but in order to preclude any unnecessary suspicion of mystery, it should be explained that Archibald Vernon was one of those persons who conceive themselves to be entirely misunderstood and ill-treated by the world; but whom the world, on the contrary, insists on believing that it understands most thoroughly, and treats most naturally. Originally intended for the bar, young Mr. Vernon had made so many steps in the direction of the woollack as are comprised in being duly entered for the Great Legal Handicap, and in having his name fairly painted on the door of one of the Gray's Inn stalls in which some of the animals designed for that race undergo preliminary treatment. But he was very soon scratched. A cleverish lad, with a ready pen for endurable verse, and a still readier pencil for smart sketching, with a considerable amount of desultory reading, and a memory for the agreeable portions of such reading, with a fluent tongue, and much energy of manner, Vernon was held, among his kinsfolk, as a young fellow who would be sure to make his way. *Nūc tēgit quod non ornavit*, was classically remarked, at the dinner on his twenty-first birthday, by an enthusiastic god-father who, to do him justice, had shown his faith in the youth's powers by never contributing, otherwise than by the most gracefully expressed wishes, to his advancement in the world. Vernon's own means were very limited, and this circumstance, fortunate indeed in so many thousand cases, might, by compelling him to avoid all the agreeable excursions from the direct road of life, and to pursue its safe and well-beaten track, have made him, in due time, the rising man whom he had been supposed to be. But, unluckily, just at the moment when various and harassing debts of no great amount, and a general sense of discomfort, discouragement, and want of purpose, were forcing the volatile Archibald Vernon into the conviction that he must buckle to honest work, and tramp away at the road in question, regardless of the fields and flowers right and left, that same god-father completed his career of neglected duties by an act of positive wrong to his god-son. The poor died, and left Vernon exactly enough, with a good deal of his small patrimony, to live upon "like"

uncommon financial error of supposing an amount that enabled him to live "as" a gentleman, and the fatal difference involved in the little words was not revealed until him until too late. The Gray's Inn stall was exchanged for handsome chambers, and by the time that these looked as delightfully as possible, that the pictures were finally and tastefully hung, that the pianoforte was in admirable tune, and that the oak and velvet furniture left nothing to be desired except the upholsterer's receipt, the susceptible Archibald discovered that to live as a gentleman meant to live with a lady, who, being his wife, could not be expected to live in chambers. So the pictures, pianoforte, oak and velvet, and Mrs. Vernon, were established in a charming house, not much too large, at Craven Hill. All went delightfully, for Emmeline Vernon was an accomplished musician, and Archibald was just of the calibre of mind that dotes on music, and it was the pleasantest occupation in the world to sit with his pretty wife till two or three in the day, singing duets, or hearing that divine thing of Mozart's, Vernon with his feet in slippers, elegantly worked by his bride, and in a velvet coat that gave the refined-looking man an appearance between that of an artist, and of an Italian nobleman, as beheld in ancient portraits. The children came with their usual celerity, and it was not until Emmeline grew rather cross and cold about playing Mozart after disagreeable interviews with traders, that Archibald Vernon once more began to think that he really must buckle to work.

But rough buckles are not readily fastened when one's muscles have been neglected. It is not agreeable to dwell on this part of Mr. Vernon's shifty history. Portions of it, prepared with a good deal of topographical exactness in regard to his various residences, are, I am sorry to say, still on record in the registry of an evilly odorous tribunal in the Rue Portugal. But who would willingly sketch the life of a family in the dispiriting and discreditable transition from comfort to need? Who cares to write or read of forestalled income, of unhonoured cheques, of humiliating obligations, of insincere promises extorted by pressing necessity, of harsh friends and callous creditors, of a wife compelled to make feminine appeals either for aid or for forbearance, and often to make both in vain, of children accustomed to see parents nervous at the knock or ring, to hear servants instructed in lying, and even, under sudden emergency, to utter the excusing or procrastinating falsehood at the bidding of parents, too eager to escape the momentary annoyance to remember the miserable lesson they were teaching? At times Vernon, heartily ashamed of his position, resolved to work himself into a worthier one, registered vows to do so, and walked out determined to do something in fulfilment; but what are a weak man's vows? Any discouragement damped his resolve within an hour of its being made; any temptation drew him away from the feeble scheme he had planned, and he returned home somewhat and deservedly less respectable in his own eyes than he had gone forth. At the same time, it would have been, for a stronger man, a hard fight that could set him right with the

talented, versatile, helpless Vernon more severely than he deserves, and that implies no light sentence. His profession he had, of course, abandoned, but he had always delighted to dabble in literature, and in the days of his prosperity his essays were thought to have a sparkle, and his poems a passion, which it is charitable to suppose had disappeared from them in the days of his adversity, when he found it so difficult to get those merits recognised by paymasters. Still, he did something, and the least motion of a stream long retards its freezing. The small, slight, occasional efforts he made in literature preserved his mind from utter stagnation, and he obtained some, but infrequent remuneration, which aided him in maintaining a certain self-respect, and which confirmed him in the belief that circumstances only, and not his own weakness, had prevented his being one of the recognised leaders of the public mind. Let it be added in his favour, that even amid the daily grievances of his lot—as he termed it—the troubles outside his dwelling, and the troubles within, these last painfully increased by the want of help from a disappointed wife, whose good looks and good temper were deserting her, and who now played Mozart only on lodging-house pianos, and chiefly at times when he would have preferred quiet—Archibald Vernon did not seek comfort at the hands of the Bottle Imp. His children never saw him in a condition in which—if he had a laugh to spare—it was not as true and fresh as their own.

I feel that perhaps I am treating him too indulgently, and in the interests of morality and society one ought to use stronger words against a man who was an idle and dishonest citizen, and who was the father of children to whom he did not do his duty. But as Lord North said when he, aware of his being about to resign, had his carriage ready at the House, while the Opposition had sent their vehicles away, "See what it is to be in the secret." If it had been my melancholy duty to finish Archibald Vernon's history by saying that he died in the Bench, or emigrated, a broken-hearted man, to Australia (and was poisoned on the voyage by the ignorant surgeon of an emigrant vessel), I would have given him the full benefit of appropriate indignation. But, happening to know that his fortune was going to be re-established, I deem harsh language uncalled for. It is well to be quite sure that a man is quite ruined, before you stamp upon him.

But, not to be too civil to the indiscreet, be it said that there was another phase in Archibald Vernon's character. Unable to succeed in the world, he naturally made up his mind that the world was all wrong. And, weaving into something which it would only be trifling with words to call a system, a mixture of the practical warp and the sentimental web, he clothed himself with a garment which thenceforth became coat-of-mail to him against the shafts of vulgar common sense. He coupled the fact that John Brown is starving with cold, and the fact that Lady Clara Vere de Vere's Italian greyhound has a warm jacket, and with perfect ease deduced the conclusion that we want a revolution. He placed the splendid receipts of the Attorney-General (whom he ex-

plained to be the minister of a false and corrupt institution) on one side, and the paltry earnings of a curate ("who, apart from his creed," said Archibald, a sentimental unbeliever, "was labouring to do good, so far as he knew") on the other, and made the portentous balance on the lawyer's side prove incontestably that pikes were the things to reduce that balance. And it is hardly needful to say, that when in the newspaper which announced the decision of the committee that there was no evidence to connect Sir Lionel Squandercash with the proved bribery at the St. Brelade's election, there also appeared the Bow Street sentence which consigned the squalid Joe Nipps to prison for picking a pocket, Vernon wrote a song with more notes of exclamation than orthodox typography permits, and beginning "Ha! ermined Fiend!" poetically regardless of the circumstance that the police magistrates do not attire themselves in the spotless fur. All this sort of thing is done by many respectable men; some, I am happy to say, would be very much offended, if you thought them weak enough to do it for other than mercantile purposes; but Vernon, so far as he could be said to have a real conviction, believed that the world was a compound of sham, cruelty, and hypocrisy—and he told his children so.

Which paternal instruction might have been less deleterious, had it been accompanied with that teaching by which religious parents make it clear to their offspring that, however bad the world may be, it is decidedly none of our business to make it worse. But Archibald Vernon, like millions of other feeble persons, confounded priests with shrines, and rejected both; and as for poor Mrs. Vernon, her religious views were originally something to the effect that she always felt good in a cathedral when the organ was playing,—and the unfortunate lady, having been rather out of the way of cathedrals during her troubles, had not had much chance of cultivating her piety. She once bought two prayer-books with gilt corners and clasps, for the eldest girls, but a landlady detained one of them, in very small part of a claim for a broken loo-table, and in the other poor Mrs. Vernon put two sovereigns to send over to Archibald when in prison, as she thought the messenger was less likely to steal a parcel than an envelope with money, and the sacred volume was left in 7 in B. No other attempt, beyond an occasional impatient wonder why the girls could not go to church, instead of lying in their beds half Sunday reading novels, was made by Mrs. Vernon in a theological direction. Nor were the poor children more fortunate in a secular point of view. For among Archibald Vernon's sentimentalisms was one to this effect (I think he had stolen it from some German gentleman who was famous for demoralising the minds of his young lady correspondents), namely, that a child's heart was Heaven's flower-garden, and it was blasphemy for man to seek to lay it out his own way. This delightful aphorism Vernon was fond of quoting, especially when asked whether Beatrice, and Bertha, and Laura did not go to school. But I do not believe that he was entirely sincere in this matter, or that if he had been richer he would not have had good instruction for those three handsome, intelli-

gent, affectionate girls, whom, even in their uncares-for state, it was impossible not to love. He taught them a little himself, and tried to teach them more; but between the comfortless irregularities and the actual troubles of home, and an entire want of support from his wife, who at times was moved even to deride what were praiseworthy efforts by the father, the domestic tutor was not very assiduous, or very successful. The girls grew on, and bloomed, and were loveable, but owed little to any outward or visible system of instruction. Was it ill or well for them, that when Laura, the third, was about twelve, their unhappy, petulant, negligent mother died? Emmeline Vernon was all that—and yet she was their mother, and the scale of frailties must be heavily weighted before it descends against that word. Well, or ill? Perhaps events may aid us in judging.

This, then, was the father of Mrs. Lygon. To complete his story, a few words will suffice. The death of Mrs. Vernon, after a trying illness, made more trying by privations and troubles, and by the unfortunate disposition of the sufferer, was scarcely felt as a blow by her husband, whose nature she had hardened, in no small degree, by her demonstrative unfitness to share the lot they had riaked together. But before the mother was laid in the grave, two of her aunts, who had never forgiven her a marriage with an Atheist, Profligate, and Blasphemer (they were of Clapham, and Clapham has never been accused of inarticulateness, however little justice or charity may have to do with its utterances), saw that they could properly come forward to the rescue of their niece's children. On the solemn condition that Mr. Vernon should not interfere with the education of the children, or give them any of his infidel books to read, the Misses Judson would make the family a regular allowance, and pay the bills at a day-school. This point, however, was attained only by more determined obstinacy than Archibald had been credited with. Nothing—not even the solemn assurance of both the old ladies that his daughters were certainly going, Clapham mentioned where, but I had rather not—would induce him to part with his children, and a compromise was at length effected. He was asked whether he objected to reside in the country, to which he replied in the negative, adding, convincingly, from a pious poet whom it was rather strange that he should know:

“God made the country and man made the town.”

The Misses Judson requested him not to be profane during the brief time they should be together, and were rather offended than not on its being shown to them that the line was by Mr. Cowper, who wrote so many Olney Hymns. However, being in the forgiving way, they forgave this and other matters, or said they did, and, at all events, Mr. Vernon and his daughters were soon afterwards settled at Liphthwait, one of whose Evangelical ministers was a Christian friend of the old ladies, and Beatrice, Bertha, and Laura were sent to a tolerably good school.

“Now, of instruction as well as of ignorance,” says the heathen writer, “there are various kinds.”

(To be continued.)

THE NEEDLEWOMAN.

HER HEALTH.

If my readers were at this moment to tell their thoughts, we should find them ready to turn away from the disagreeable and well-worn subject of Distressed Needlewomen, that class which has been the grief and shame of society from the day when Hood published the “Song of the Shirt.” We all grow weary of any hopeless prospect; and we may well think that everything that can be said about the poor needlewomen has been said many times over, through many years. But perhaps I am not going to say much of poor sempstresses; and perhaps, also, their condition is not the desperate and hopeless thing it was. Perhaps the topic of the health of women who sew may have some interest of another kind than that which makes us miserable.

Who are the needlewomen of our country?

I wish I could reply, all the women in the country. I should be heartily glad if there were no women, from the palace to the cottage, who were unable to cut out and make clothes, and to amuse their minds and gratify their taste by ornamental needlework. It is the unequal distribution of the art which causes so much misery in many ways among us, and which causes the art itself to deteriorate as it does.

Here it may be objected that the very reason of the depression of the needlewomen as a class is that sewing is a universal feminine employment, so that professional sempstresses are reduced to the very lowest rate of pay by the competition of the whole sex; whereas, in other occupations, the competition arises from some restricted rivalry in their own trade. This is partly true. It is true, no doubt, in regard to the shirts and petticoats, and the children's clothes in ordinary domestic use. Middle-class families make these things at home, by the hands of mothers, daughters, and maids; and throughout that order of society it would be thought strange to spend money in paying sempstresses liberally for work which can be done at home. Thus, when plain-work is given out at all by household managers, it is at a rate so low that one wonders how it answers to the sempstress; but here again comes in the peculiarity of the case. The sempstress is, nine times in ten, a wife or mother engaged in a home of her own, and wishing to earn something in the hours when she can sew. In short, sewing both is and is not a professional occupation; and the consequence is that it is the worst paid, because every private needlewoman helps to reduce the pay of the professional sempstress. But it does not follow from this that all domestic women can sew.

If girls had fair play in education, I believe that all would be needlewomen, from natural liking. I have seen many bad needlewomen, and some who could hardly sew at all; but I never saw one who might not, I believe, have enjoyed the satisfactions of the art, if there had not been neglect and mismanagement. One would think that girls of the labouring class, whose lives are not overfull of pleasures, might be provided with this simple and pleasant occupation, which would be profitable to them in every way: yet how many are there of that very large class who are skilful in the art?

Here we come upon the unequal distribution. I know a rural neighbourhood where the great lady, a countess, had such a passion for plain needlework, that she employed nearly all her time in making shirts and shifts; while the cottagers' wives for miles round used their needles like skewers, or let their husbands and sons go in rags. The countess gave away fine linen shirts by dozens among her friends, while her husband's labourers rarely got a cotton shirt to fit. One consequence of this incapacity in poor women is, that the professional class of slop-workers has grown to what we have seen it. Besides the army and navy, there is almost the whole range of our labouring classes to be supplied with cheap garments, ready made; and thus, while the wives and daughters, who ought to be making the shirts, are unable to do it, there are thousands of needlewomen slaving at it day and night, for a hire which does not give them bread.

Even so, there is more good needlework done in cottages than in the homes of factory workers. That is a sad story, the inability of factory "hands" to sew, or cook, or clean a floor; but my topic now is the health of needlewomen; and factory women are in no way concerned in that.

I have spoken of the poor sempstresses as a class that was; and of their troubles as of something past. I trust we may consider their position ~~as~~ already ameliorated by the introduction of the sewing-machine, loud as would be the outcry from some of them, if they were to hear this said. The truth is, they were reduced to be themselves sewing machines of an imperfect sort, whose work was sure to be superseded by a machine which cannot suffer, and pine, and grow blind, and drop stitches, and spoil fastenings. It must be a mercy to stop the working of human machines, driven by the force of hunger, and disordered by misery. If the work can be done by an inanimate machine, it ought to be so done; and if the poor women ask what is to become of them, the answer is, that their lot really could not be made worse; while, for a large proportion of them, the new machine is an actual redemption. Their work had become too bad to be endured; while their lot was too hard to be endured. Now, there is good work again, more perfect work than was ever before seen; and the machine-workers get, as women's wages go, good pay. The transition stage, during which women's labour must be turned towards other occupations, is a very hard one. Last spring, an association was formed in London for the purpose of bringing the needlewomen and their proper employers, the outfitters, face to face, and ousting the middle-men, the contractors; who, giving security for the materials in a way impossible to the workers, are charged with the whole business of providing the garments, and secure their profits by enforcing the extremity of cheapness in the article of pay.

This society, known as that which abides at 26, Lamb's Conduit Street, must have done good, and may yet have time to do more, while the operation of the sewing-machine is getting settled; but it is the machine which must put an end to the straining of eyes over the single candle, and the fearful irritation which attends the exhaustion

of certain muscles, while the rest of the frame is left unexercised. There are thousands of the lowest order of needlewomen who would be better in the workhouse than in their actual condition; and there is some comfort—though a melancholy one enough—in perceiving that in a little while that lowest class will have disappeared. In another generation there will be no call for such a class. They have, poor souls! caused such a decline of good needlework in the country, that some radical remedy was sure to be found. While we were hearing of the woes of their class from overcrowding, it was the universal complaint of housewives that they could get no needlework well done. It was whipstitch, and fastenings that gave way, and buttonholes that burst, and hemming that you might pull out from end to end by a tug at the thread. A young friend of mine, of German extraction, about to be married, had made, with family assistance, most of her new clothes: but some having to be put out, a sewing-school of considerable credit was selected, and patterns were sent. The answer to the application was that the commission would be executed, but that the lady must not expect work like her own; that such work was, in fact, not known in our country. I wished the authorities of the school could have seen how fast the work went off under fingers and eyes trained as they are trained in Germany. We shall now have the option of good work, on the one hand; and, on the other, a clearance made of the murderous competition which has reduced the *physique* and the *morale* of our poor needlewomen to the lowest condition. What the change will be we may judge, not only by what we see in walking through the streets of London, but by attending to the results of the sewing-machine in the United States, where it was invented.

The annual money value of the sewing required by the American nation that can be done by the machine is estimated at fifty-eight millions of pounds sterling; and a large proportion of the saving is already made. In the city of New York alone, the annual saving is a million and a half on the clothing of men and boys. The same amount is saved in Massachusetts on shoes and boots alone. The machine has revolutionised about forty distinct branches of manufacture, besides creating new ones. Here lies the solace of the poor needlewomen. A multitude of them will sooner or later be employed in these fresh areas of industry; and not a few are already tasting a degree of comfort they never knew before. As slaves of the contractors for the outfitters they may have earned three or four shillings a week, at the expense of eyesight and health. Those among them who can adapt themselves to the new circumstances will earn more than twice as much, with little fatigue. We may then decline going further into the consideration of the health of this class of needlewomen, in the hope that the causes of their miseries are about to be removed.

There is nothing in the introduction of the sewing-machine which need affect the object of training girls to be good sempstresses. Some of my readers may have seen the Report (1855) of the Rev. J. P. Norris, one of the Inspectors of

Schools, in which he gives his view of the importance of needlework in the education of girls. He thinks that, apart from the value of the art, it would be worth while to spend half the school hours in sewing, for the sake of the effect on the girls' characters. He speaks of the order, quiet, cleanliness, and cheerful repose with activity, which prevail in afternoon school hours devoted to sewing, —a real training for the home, while the occupation also tends to impress the intellectual lessons of the morning. Looking forward a few years, the sense of the fitness of the training to make good wives and mothers must be very strong; for one may almost divide into sheep and goats the cottage households in which the wife and mother is a capable needlewoman or not one at all. The sewing mother, with her children round her, makes the husband proud of his home, while dirty brats, playing out of doors in rage and tatters, with an idle or a muddling mother within, are more likely to deter a man from coming home than to tempt him from the public-house. I, for one, feel obliged to Mr. Norris for what he has said on behalf of the girls, whose education is so deplorably perverted or neglected in the classes of which he speaks. I think, moreover, that it would be well if needlework were thoroughly taught, as formerly, to girls who, when wives, will not be the heads of cottage households.

There would be no occasion to make growing children sit on hard seats, without backs, or rests for the feet, as I have elsewhere complained, on the part of a past generation. Due care should be taken to vary the posture sufficiently often, to afford a sufficiency of light, and to let the spirit of enterprise enter into a girl's project of work. Such points being duly attended to, there will be no difficulty in getting the children interested in the employment. For one that twirls her thimble on her finger, and looks at the clock, there will be scores who will be unwilling to leave their job for play or dinner. In their own drawing-rooms, in after life, the difference will be seen between those who have been trained to the needle and those who have not. The ease and mastery of a thorough needlewoman, who works out her thought on her material, and produces something perfect in its way, are perceptible to the varied old bachelor who calls sewing "working," and working "sewing;" while there is something annoying to "real ladies" (as their maids say), as well as to gentlemen, in the awkwardness of unskilful hands, which tangle the thread, and pull the stitches, and break the needle, and leave the skein of cotton or silk on the floor, and produce something ugly, after all their toil.

These last are apt to discourse of the unhealthiness of needlework. To them it is no doubt laborious. They stoop, and put themselves in a constrained posture: they pore over their work, and set their muscles to work expressly and consciously with every drawing of the thread. There must be much fatigue in this. It cannot be denied, either, that prolonged sewing is very hurtful, and constant sewing probably fatal. Any mechanical action which employs a few muscles almost exclusively must be bad; and any diligent needlewoman can describe the sensation between

the shoulders, and the nervous irritability which constitute real suffering when the needle has been plied too long. Young wives, preparing the infant wardrobe for the first time, have often done themselves harm by getting into this over-wrought condition over their enchanting employment. They are very wrong. They should stop before they feel irritable or weary, and they should at once go for a walk, or pass to some active employment. It is nonsense, too, in these days of marking inks, to strain their precious eyesight over the pedantic marking methods of our grandmothers, who made a great point of marking fine cambric as true as coarse linen. But needlework is not to be condemned because some women still pursue it without moderation or good sense.

Some months since I was petitioned to speak up for fancywork as a solace to invalids and sorrowful people. I certainly can do it with a safe conscience; for my needle has been an inestimable blessing to me during years of ill health. It is sometimes said that the needle is to a woman what the cigar is to the man—a tranquillising, equalising influence, conservative and restorative. It is at least this; and I should imagine more. We are apt to underrate the positive pleasure there is in mechanical employment, pursued with aptness and skill. Mr. Chadwick is fond of telling of a man in a chalk-pit who admitted to him that, during years spent in simply cutting square blocks of chalk, he had never, he believed, failed to enjoy an actual relish, on each occasion, of the act of producing his block of chalk. I can well believe this from the perpetual pleasantness of setting stitches, when it is effectually done. But in fancywork—the elaborate fancywork of invalids—there is much more. If I say that it is somewhat like the gratification of the artist, I shall be told that it is infinitely better to paint or draw; that better effects are far more speedily produced, and so on. It is true that any good drawing is of a higher quality than the best needlework; but then the work is of a totally different kind. Needlework is a solace for women far too ill to draw well, or to commit themselves to the excitements of art. Each is good in its own place; and, in its own place, I claim for the much abused fancywork (I include woolwork) of the drawing-room some respect, over and above mere toleration. I mean, if it is good of its kind. Bad fancy-work no more deserves toleration than bad pictures or bad music.

My readers may perhaps have no idea how many professional needlewomen there are in Great Britain; and they may not have considered into how many classes the whole may be divided. There is no branch of industry in which it is so difficult to ascertain the numbers, because, as I said before, there are so many women who take in work to employ some spare hours profitably. They take pay, but are not professional sempstresses. Again, there are about 100,000 shoemakers' wives, most of whom, no doubt, help to support the family by shoebinding. Drawing the line as well as they could, the Census Commissioners of 1851 returned the number of sewing women in Great Britain as being (without the shoemakers' wives) 388,302.

These are divided into five classes; and a sixth

head includes the miscellaneous sorts of needlework which cannot be classed.

The dressmakers and milliners make up considerably more than half of the total, their numbers being 202,448. The shirtmakers and other plain sewers come next, being 60,588. Then come the glovers and hosiery (40,766), the hat and bonnet-makers (27,176), the shoebinders and sewers (22,657), and the staymakers (10,383). Nearly 25,000 come under the head of "miscellaneous." If the same rules of arrangement are employed next spring, we shall be able to learn by the Census of 1861 whether the sewing machine has dismissed more needlewomen than the increase of national numbers and wealth has brought into the business. It should be remembered in this connection that the opening of new and remunerative employments to women must operate in increasing the business, and therefore in time the number of professional needlewomen, while it tends to raise their pay. Women employed as compositors or accountants now put out their sewing, or some of it; whereas before, they not only made all their own clothes, but probably trenched upon the professional needlewomen by taking in more. The better occupied other women are, the more will the needlewomen prosper; and the coming Census cannot but show some expansion in the field of female industry.

Next to the shirtmakers, the dressmakers and milliners move most compassion in the rest of society. I wish that means could be found to move those whose fault it is that these women work long hours—hours murderously long. The shirtmaker works long hours because she cannot otherwise earn her three or four shillings a week. The dressmaker works long hours in London because ladies all rush to give their orders at the same time, and are all in a hurry to have them executed. So much has been said about this—the sinfulness of such thoughtlessness and selfishness has been so plainly exposed at public meetings, and through the press, that it is inconceivable that the evil should be now what it once was. I had occasion to know something of the way of going on twenty years ago. I knew the story of a reduced widow lady whose daughter was apprenticed to a great dressmaker at the West End. The girl drooped and became ill; and at last it was necessary to sacrifice her prospects, and the premium paid, if brain or life was to be saved. During the throng of orders in the London season, the girl left the workroom only every two or three days or nights. The room was kept hot and light; the workers were fed with prime beef and porter, and well plied at night with strong green tea. When any one fainted (as this girl did) she was laid on the floor to revive, and as soon as she could sit up again, she had more tea, or more porter, and was set to work again. She repeatedly went on for three days and two nights, with mere snatches of sleep in her chair. It is needless to say that her eyes were strained, her brain was dizzy, her liver was disordered, and she was fearfully nervous. Her mother ahrank from the feel of her hands. Remonstrance with the employer was of no avail. She said her customers left her no option: and those who entered her concern must

conform to circumstances. She was herself driven, and she must drive others while the season lasted. When the season was over they could all rest.

Since that time there have been houses which observe reasonable hours. But there will be no cure for the evil till the customers attend to their duty in the case. The most thoughtless fine ladies must know long before what dresses they will be likely to want during the season; and they might order at least all the plainer sorts, if not the whole, at a sufficiently long interval to enable the business to be better distributed than it can be under the ordinary pressure which precedes a drawing-room. There is something childish in the haste which unemployed women put into their little affairs, sufficiently mortifying to the wiser part of their sex; but the feeling of contempt rises into strong indignation when the habit of haste inflicts such mortal injury as it does among the dressmakers. It is a child's "way" to fidget and fret for its food while it is cooling on the plate before its eyes. It is the "way" of certain imperious young men in Batavia, effeminate to excess, to cry like babies if kept waiting for their tea. It is a pity to be obliged to add that it is the "way" of not a few ladies in England to be in such a hurry for a new dress as to inflict torture on the makers, in spite of all warning and remonstrance.

It is a common observation that blind persons are apt to hurry those who serve them. Not seeing how any work gets on, they are always fancying it more advanced than it can possibly be, and make their own observations on the slowness into which mankind are falling,—so different from the activity in their young day. The letter would have been written—the cap would have been made—in half the time, or they would have rued it. Fine ladies who never tried to make a dress themselves have no excuse for criticising the workers in the same way. Before they dare to do it they should enter a workroom, and see how long it takes to flounce a skirt, even amidst the feverish and trembling haste of the overwrought workers. An hour so spent would be salutary to all parties. But there are even more ladies who do not consider the subject at all. They buy a dress, and then only know that they long to see it home—want to have it and wear it—and use all the power of employer over employed to get the toy brought home at the earliest possible moment. Such women may be soft-hearted in their way about human suffering. They may give money freely to charitable institutions, or to cases of individual distress. If so, there should be some one to tell them that, while giving a sovereign or two to a hospital, and another sovereign or two for the relief of some reduced gentlewomen who have pawned their last shawl or gown, they have themselves blinded one or two apprentices, thrown another into a brain fever, or compelled others to throw up their apprenticeship, and be the reduced gentlewoman who has to pawn her last gown. Such things as these she has done in the course of showing how childish a woman can be who pines for *saab*. If any such woman, or any other kind of woman, supposes me romancing, let her look at the evidence given before the Select Committee of the Lords, in 1855, on the condition of Needle-

women. There was an earlier report on the case of the milliners which made such an impression on the highest lady in the land, that she inquired of those about her who were most likely to know, whether such things could be true. No one so impressed could ever hurry her dressmaker again.

The dressmaker ought to understand her liabilities, before she pledges herself to the employment. If this were properly attended to, there would be fewer dressmakers, and they would make a better stand for their health. I should be sorry to have a hand in inducing any girl to apprentice herself to the business, within the range of the London season. In provincial towns it is another affair.

The workwoman should make certain stipulations, which nothing should induce her to surrender. If she is lodged in the establishment, she should insist on being allowed to air her room. The collective workers should take care that their day-room is kept cool and airy, and the fire and lights properly managed. Each should ensure a daily walk,—either by being sent out on business, or by the work being so arranged as to admit of an hour's exercise, morning or evening. Every encroachment on moderate hours of work should be resisted, except on special occasions, such as a large order for mourning, when all must accommodate. In London, at times of extreme pressure, the meals are hotted in the smallest number of minutes. Then the cutter-out and the attendants in the show-room are glad to sit down; and the sewers are equally glad to get up; and they may be seen swallowing their meals standing. In the dressmaker's ordinary life, the meals should be comfortably put on table in a fresh room, and a sufficient time allowed for leisurely eating,—to say nothing of some little time being allowed for rest after the dinner. It is a substantial gain when the worker lives in a home or a lodging of her own; for then she can make arrangements for counteracting much of the mischief of her occupation. A bedroom to herself, quiet and airy; an early morning walk; and a change of scene and associates every twenty-four hours, may improve a woman's chances of health incalculably.

The dressmaker's and milliner's aspect is familiar to doctors, and all other observers of countenances. The eyes have a dead look; the complexion is not clear, and usually more or less yellow; the frown shows that there is a tight band round the forehead; the carriage betokens a chill down the back; the movements show that the feet are cold; the respiration is not free, and the only doubt is whether the mischief is in the lungs or the liver; and, above all, the anxiety of the countenance tells the tale of an unnatural mode of life. On inquiry, it appears that the appetite is not good,—that the sleep is not good,—that the spirits are not good. It would be a wonder if they were; for the sight is failing. Oculists tell us that they have always many needlewomen on their lists, and that they always expect more after a general mourning. It is quite right to recommend, as they do, that the workwomen should change the colours on which they are employed very frequently; and also, that

there should be green furniture,—curtains at least,—in the workrooms, as is the frequent practice among lacemakers, and the constant usage among embroiderers in China.

There is no use in preaching against tea to needlewomen. They cannot do without it, and ought not to be asked; for it is a genuine medicine to sedentary persons. When taken—strong, green, and hot—to keep people awake when they ought to be asleep, it is poison: but black tea is a medicine for a delicate liver, when taken in moderation, at breakfast and teatime. There is much more need of warning about the porter and ale and mutton three times a day, with which overwrought dressmakers and shopwomen (and shopmen too) are kept up to the calls upon them.

On the whole, it is best, even now, when so few occupations are open to women, to sacrifice much, where there is any option, rather than enter on an occupation so injurious as that of incessant needlework. Where the necessity is imperative, it is a duty to take every possible precaution against the dangers of the case. There are hundreds now among us, blind, consumptive, or suffering under spinal disease, who might by timely care have been saved. How many more are in their graves, who shall tell us?

In Ireland there is a class different from any yet mentioned. The "hand-sewing," paid for by Glasgow merchants chiefly, employs 400,000 women and girls in their own cabins. The work is embroidery on mullin,—the patterns being stamped by men in the great houses in Glasgow and Belfast, from which the work is given out. It was a great thing for Ireland, after the famine, that the women and girls earned in this way between eighty and ninety thousand pounds per week; but the growing children pay dear for the honour of helping to support the family. They earned only sixpence a day, poor things! and it was sad to see them leaning their weary backs against the door-posts, or growing crooked in their unchanging and constrained position. Now that times have improved, and are improving, in their country, we should be glad to hear of fewer "hand-sewers" and of more women being engaged in the linen manufacture, from the flax-growing process up to the final act of finishing the packages of beautiful damasks, linens, and muslins.

The sewing-machine may intervene here, as in almost every department of needlework. It can embroider beautifully already. Some may imagine that it will preclude human sewing altogether; but this need not be believed, any more than it can at present be wished. It seems as if there must always be parts of the work (whatever its kind) which must be done by hand; and those parts will always be best done by hands which are skilful in the whole process. Thus we need not fear that the graceful and pleasant arts of the needle will die out, within any assignable time, but may apply ourselves to stop the sacrifice of life and health which is the barbarous feature of the art, and retain and refine whatever in it is serviceable and elegant. We must not stop in our improvements till needlewomen are indistinguishable from the rest of the world on the ground of health.

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENCES.

NO. II.—PORTSMOUTH.

IN those glorious old days, still remembered with a sigh of regret by a few very elderly gentlemen of sporting tendencies, when the noble science, as its votaries called it, was one of the specialities of every English gentleman, from princes of the blood to "seedy hucks," it must have been a curious study for any one not bitten with the prevalent mania to observe the care and pains bestowed upon the heroes of the ring, to watch how the universal interest concentrated itself for the time upon the pair of brawny louts who were getting ready to bruise nature's noblest handiwork out of all recognisable shape and proportion, how the noblemen and the young bloods who led the fashion were wont to make up parties, and drive down to their man's training quarters in all sorts of quaint-looking vehicles whose bizarre outlines have been preserved for us by undying Gilray; how they inspected, and overhauled, and cross-examined their pet; how they instituted the strictest inquiries into his diet, his clothing, his habits, his indulgences; how they one after another watched their opportunity to take his trainer aside, and confidentially direct him to let the Chicken want for nothing, and to spare no expense, so that he was brought to the scene of his contest "as bright as a star, and as strong as a lion;" how, returning to town, each set cracked up its man to the other; how they bragged of the hardness of his thigh and the development of his flexor; and how they laid each other swingeing bets on the event. How, moreover, the common sort followed, sheep-like, in the wake of the young bloods, and in taverns and wine-shops, and gambling-houses, and even in the rude settles of country road-side inns, discussed after their fashion the news of the animal's progress, and laid modest wagers on the man of their choice. All this has passed away from among us, and we go mad, and speculate, and argue, and wager about matters of heavier moment it may be—that is, if weight of metal is to kick the beam—and the few lingering remnants of the prize ring are "brutal ruffians," and their fewer patrons "knaves or idiots."

But what on earth has all this to do with our National Defences, or with Portsmouth? Just thus much—that Portsmouth and Cherbourg are, for the nonce, our two fighting men—standing frowning at each other across those eighty miles of Channel that intervene, and ready on small provocation to be foul of one another with something harder, heavier, and infinitely more damaging than the heaviest human fist that ever shot straight out from shoulder. The parallel holds good throughout; both on the French side and our own, there is the same extravagant excitement, the same cracking up, the same wagering, and the same earnest entreaty that no expense should be spared. Even in days when the late Duke of Wellington complained that he could not get £1000 from Parliament for experiments on which we now think nothing of spending £10,000 at a time, Portsmouth could always manage to smuggle a snug little sum through for itself to be expended in strengthening its defences.

The fact is, there is not only a general feeling—

a little undefined, perhaps, but none the weaker for that—that the place is of immense national importance; but there is, moreover, and this especially of late years, a feeling of uneasy jealousy directed across the Channel, and a sort of tacit resolution not to allow one man to lose a chance of asserting his superiority over the other. So it has happened that the defences of Portsmouth have been the work of succeeding ages, expanding with the exigencies, intelligence, and the apprehensions of the day, and exhibiting rather an accumulation of successive distinct devices conceived *pro re nata*, than, as Cherbourg—a large and comprehensive scheme, imagined and carried out on one uniform plan.

The recognition of the great national importance of the position of Portsmouth Harbour has been so general, and it has received so much discussion and illustration in the course of the last two or three years, at the hands of essayists and journalists of all sorts and classes, that everybody must be tolerably familiar with those peculiarities of its position from which its importance is derived; it is nevertheless necessary to a due comprehension of the enlarged system of defence now in progress of construction, that the salient points of the position should be briefly recalled.

Looking at a map of the south coast of England, it is easy to conceive a time when the Isle of Wight formed a promontory jutting out from the main land, between Alban's Head and Selsea Bill. If some enormous Saurian of the very alder times, bad, in a fit of extreme rage, or uncontrollable hunger, taken a bite at such a promontory; and, not liking the morsel, had returned it a few miles from the spot whence he had taken his bite, the result one can imagine being precisely the appearance which the Isle of Wight and the opposite shore mutually present. By the way, there are one or two such "bites," on a smaller scale in ranges of English and Irish mountains, though these are generally assigned to an ancient reptile, whose portraiture belongs rather to the imagination of monks, than the researches of science. At the bottom of our "bite," lies the deep gulf known as Southampton Water, and between it and Selsea Bill, a system of bays, peninsulas, and islands, which cut up and intersect the whole of the dead level of which that piece of country consists. The easternmost of these is Chichester Harbour, the next Langton Harbour; both are exceedingly, and we believe increasingly, shallow, and at dead low water present nothing but hundreds of acres of mud with some lazy oozy channels winding in and out in the middle. Between the mouth of Langton Harbour, however, and Southampton Water, the coast, after advancing rather prominently into the sea southward, both from east and west, recedes somewhat suddenly into a deep bay, at the bottom of which is the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour, very narrow (about 220 yards), and very deep (ten fathoms, or sixty feet at low water). The harbour gradually widens for about a mile and a half northward, with ample water for the largest line-of-battle ships, and then suddenly expands into a considerable inland lake, some five miles each way in its greatest dimensions, presenting at high

water a very pleasing effect, but at low water differing little from its neighbour of Langston, except that its intersecting channels are deeper. Outside the harbour mouth, the continual drainage of the harbour through the sluice of its mouth has piled up a long shoal, which runs for nearly two miles in a south-easterly direction, parallel with the eastern coast of the bay, and narrowing the navigable channel to about a quarter of a mile from the shore, whilst beyond the head of this shoal, which is called the Spit Sand, is the world-famous anchorage of Spithead, effectually sheltered from every wind that can blow, except that from S.E., and which, until the other day, was generally considered a tolerably innocuous quarter on the British coast. To the south and west of Portsmouth Harbour lies the huge natural earthwork of the Isle of Wight, the whole southern side of which, with some exceptions, presents an inaccessible rampart of cliff and rock, and the narrow channel between the western extremity of which and the mainland is still further defended by the natural difficulties of an extremely intricate navigation, and a tremendous current. To the south-east the anchorage is open—but of this more presently.

This extremely snug position of Portsmouth Harbour must have struck our ancestors very forcibly. There is not the slightest occasion to drag the reader through a tedious historical disquisition on the rise and progress of the place. It is merely the recognition of its importance as a military and commercial harbour, as well as a place of embarkation for the continent, that need be impressed. When that impression first began to prevail is not material. County historians are of course fond of carrying its date back to the remotest antiquity that local pride can conceive, and without venturing into the mythical regions of Lud and "Brute," will allow no later date to the commencement of its importance than the era of the Roman rule. A modern French historian of Algeria disposes of a grave chronological difficulty in a very pleasant and summary manner by assigning to the event in question "*une époque absolument inconnue*," and it is far more convenient for our present purpose to dispose of the earliest rise of the harbour to the post of an important sea-port in a similar manner. Whenever this event really did take place, the local tradition seems reasonable enough, namely, that the remains of Porchester Castle, with its fine old massy towers and keep of evident Norman construction, mark the site of the ancient sea-port, in days when there was more water and less mud in the upper part of the harbour; but that, the one diminishing and the other increasing, the old port was gradually abandoned for one nearer the sea—in short, on the site of the present Portsmouth.

The convenience of this port with its roadstead as a place of debarkation and embarkation has been recognised by all sorts of people, by Saxon Ports and Norman Robert, by the Empress Maud and Henry III., by other Henrys, and Edwards, and Richards, by Charles's Duke of Buckingham, who here met Felton's knife as the Rochelle expe-

our statesmen and naval commanders, down to the rendezvous days of the late war, to the days of our own Baltic and Channel fleets; and last, though not least, at any rate in his own opinion, to the days of the lately arrived Persian ambassador in our finest transport ship. A corresponding recognition of the necessity for fortifications kept pace with the growing consciousness of the importance of the position. The French were not idle in evincing a similar appreciation, but in a very disagreeable manner, and a raid they made on the place in King Edward III.'s time, and in which they burned the town and shipping, though visited by a mettlesome retaliation on the part of the townspeople themselves, who a short time after played a return match in the mouth of the Seine, and brought off "a great booty of wine," seems, nevertheless, to have set subsequent monarchs thinking of the wisdom of some regular system of fortifications. What Edward IV. began in this way was carried on by subsequent sovereigns, though for a very long time little seems to have been thought of but the merest obvious protection of the narrow gut which forms the entrance to the harbour. In old John Leland's time, there was, "at this point of the Haven," (still called "the Point," by the way), "a great round tourre," which, with the view of enabling us accurately to estimate its dimensions, he adds is "almost double in quantitie and strenkith to that that is on the west side of the haven right agayn," (now Block House Fort), "and here is a mighty chayne of yren to draw from toure to toure." Queen Bess showed her wisdom in thinking the fortifications worth very considerable outlay, so did the advisers of the Merrie Monarch, as well as his contrast, phlegmatic, calculating William of Orange.

In short, one may say that from Henry VIII.'s time down to our own days, scarce any government has failed to contribute something to the strengthening of the national stronghold.

After all these years of care and pains bestowed on "the defence of Portsmouth dockyard and harbour, as also the fine roadstead at Spithead, against attack or occupation by an enemy," an object which "has ever been considered of primary importance," it is rather mortifying to find that as regards an attack from seaward, "it is evident that the existing defences would not suffice to protect either the dockyard or the anchorage against attack by an enemy's fleet in the present day," and that as far as a land attack is concerned, "the lines have long been considered a most inefficient protection;" mortifying in truth, but the secret is easily discovered. It is the same as has been hinted at in the first paper on this subject in connection with the fortifications at Sheerness and Chatham. Steam and rifled cannon, and iron-cased ships, have revolutionised warfare in many of its leading principles. In old days, no one dreamt of opening fire on a fortress at a greater distance than 1000 yards; the new works recommended in 1825, and in part completed, were considered to have provided amply for the improvements in modern artillery, by extending the works of defence to a distance of 4000 yards; and these

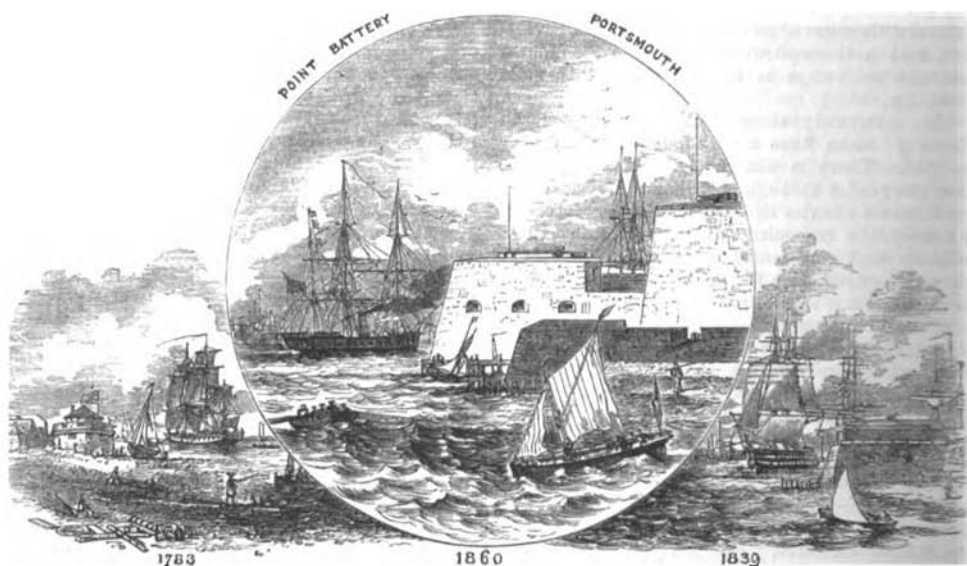
before noticed, modern progress doubles that distance; nay, Sir W. Armstrong deposes, that "for special service, guns might be constructed to give a range of six miles, or perhaps more," and the committee, on the effect of the new rifled-cannon on fortifications, inform us that it will now be "necessary that an enemy be kept at a distance of 9000 yards,* or five miles," and that thus "a place situated on a flat, or surrounded by heights that look into it from that distance, would require a contour of outworks upwards of thirty miles in extent."

There is another point to be borne in mind in considering the effect of the modern method of warfare, at least as far as a sea attack is concerned. Our heaviest ordnance are placed, and with reason, on gunboats. A very few of these, armed with a couple of the new rifled-cannon each, and firing conical shell, would be sufficient to set

* See foot-note to previous article, p. 544.

all Portsmouth dockyard in a blaze at a distance of four miles, whilst at that distance each gunboat presents but a tiny mark for the batteries on shore. Nor is this all. The plan of action with gunboats is—as at Sweaborg—to keep constantly in motion, generally circling round and round, easing for a moment as the gun is ready, delivering fire, and then steaming on again during the reloading. To hit so small an object under such circumstances is, as has been observed, extremely difficult. No wonder that Sir Wm. Armstrong considers that "at 4000 yards a gunboat would be practically safe."

The principle of modern defences, therefore, is necessarily no longer a complete enceinte, as in old days, by which the place to be protected was surrounded by a cunningly devised system of ramparts and ditches, so arranged as that the various parts mutually supported each other; or rather, it is not only this, for the old ramparts are still good for



close fighting, but it consists principally in pushing forward to a sufficient distance, in advance of the place to be defended, a series of detached forts, or "out-works," as they are called, so arranged as at once to be each a little fortress in itself, and at the same time assist its neighbours on both sides with that most terrible of all artillery appliances—a cross-fire. Through a well arranged cordon of such works, it would be impossible, or nearly so, for an enemy to push his way on land, at least without first reducing them; and whether at land or sea, even a successful dash through them, without reducing them, would leave the advancing force open to attack in the rear. In some cases, as we shall see presently, it is deemed advisable to connect these detached works by lines; but the principle remains the same.

It has been necessary to explain at length this principle of modern fortification, because, without some comprehension of it, it would be difficult to understand the full object of the *seven-and-twenty*

detached forts, with which in our engraving the country round Portsmouth appears dotted; whilst with such a comprehension, the system becomes the simplest thing in the world.

A land attack on Portsmouth would be made either from the west or from the north; the first, by an enemy who had landed somewhere west of the Needles, for, as we shall presently see, the passage of the western entrance of the Solent by a force of troops and artillery sufficient to effect a landing between Southampton Water and Stokes's Bay, may be looked upon as an improbability, nearly amounting to an impossibility; the other, by an enemy who had landed either on that spot or eastward of Langston Harbour, with a view of marching on London, and who should either attack Portsmouth as his first step, or detach a portion of his army to destroy it, whilst his main body kept our force in the field in check.

The advance from the westward would meet with the triple line of defence presented by (1st)



.. Portsmouth Lines; B. Gosport Lines; C. The Dockyard; D. The Victualling Yard; E. Point Battery; F. Block House Fort; G. Monkton Fort; H. Works on Giffkicker Point I. Works in Stokes's Bay; J. J. J. &c. Chain of Forts (1825); K. K. &c. Chain of new Outworks; L. L. &c. Chain of new Outworks on Portsdown Hill; M. Hilsea Lines; N. Cumberland Fort; O. Eastney Fort; P. Lump's Fort; Q. Southsea Castle; R. Horse Sand Fort; S. Intermediate Fort; T. Spithead Fort; U. No Man's Land Fort; W. Sturbridge Fort; X. Appley House Battery; Y. Nettlestone Point Battery; Z. Spithead.

the chain of outlying forts (K K, &c.), which are posted from four to four and a half miles in front of the lines at Gosport, (2°) the inner line of works (J J, &c.) lying about two miles in front of the lines, and which are to be connected by regular lines, and (3°) the old Gosport lines themselves, which, though utterly inefficient as a protection against bombardment, would be nevertheless of use in repelling an attempt at capture. The distances between the forts which are to compose the outermost line of defence are such as to give full play to the principle of cross-firing; those between the forts of the second line are still less, enabling these latter to be all brought into play at once.

But the attack from which most danger seems to be apprehended is that from the ridge of hill lying northward of Portsmouth, and known as Portsdown Hill. We are told that "no position could be more favourable for effecting" the bombardment of the dockyard. "The distance varies from 6000 to 9000 yards; the naval establishments and ships in the harbour are in full view, and could be destroyed by an enemy who should succeed in establishing himself there for a short time." There was no hope of doing anything with this ridge by halves, and the bold expedient has therefore been hit upon of fortifying the whole of it from one end to the other (six miles in length). The summit of the ridge, therefore, is to be occupied by four large forts, and three smaller ones (L L, &c.). A rampart and ditch is to connect them, and be continued at each end down to the shores of Portsmouth and Langston harbours, and works in advance of these flank lines (L L) are still further to cover the approach.

This forms the first or outlying line of defence, and it should be added that the formation of Portsdown Hill, which is entirely composed of chalk, and the peculiar character of the ridge which forms its summit, which is nearly a level expanse of open down, are both peculiarly favourable to the construction of extensive military works. The chalk is easily cut into the requisite ramparts and ditches, whilst the open nature of the ground, visible along its whole length by every part, affords the greatest facilities for communication; and, though Sir J. Burgoyne points out that such lines would require an army for their defence, it must be recollected at the same time that an army would be, by parity of reasoning, needed for this attack—a huge one, indeed, if the attack is to take place simultaneously along their whole extent. If, as is more probable, it were given at but one or two points, the circumstances already pointed out render concentration of the defending force comparatively easy.

The line of works on Portsdown Hill then forms, with its two flanks, the first and most important line of defence on the north. But, as on the western or Gosport side, there are two other lines within this. The first consists of the Hilsa lines (M). It will be observed that * Portsmouth is built on the south-western corner of an island called Port-

sea Island, which is separated from the mainland by a narrow channel called Hilsa Channel, connecting Portsmouth and Langston harbours. The only roads to Portsmouth—a coach road, and the London and South Coast Railway—necessarily cross the Hilsa Channel; in fact, in this direction only is there any land access to Portsmouth at all. Along the whole of this northern end of Portsea Island runs a chain of works through which both roads pass, and which are capable of offering a formidable check to an advancing force. Hilsa lines, then, form the second line of defence on the northern side. The third is presented by the old Portsmouth lines themselves, which, like their brethren round Gosport, though inefficient to protect the dockyard from bombardment, are so far of material use in protecting the place from capture, that, if manned by an ordinarily sufficient garrison, they could not be taken without a regular siege.

Let us next turn our attention seaward, and consider the nature of the defences provided against an attack from that quarter, either on the dockyard by bombardment, or on Portsmouth altogether by capture, or on the roadstead at Spithead by a dashing cutting-out expedition; and of these three, let it be mentioned in passing, that the third appears to have been thought worthy of much careful consideration. It is pointed out that "in all former wars Spithead has been used as a perfectly secure rendezvous for a fleet; that receiving ships, sheer hulks, and many other appliances for repair, have been stationed there; extensive repairs by shipwrights, artificers, and riggers, have been carried on there, and no ships used ever to be allowed to proceed into harbor, merely for victualling and watering, or completing the ordinary supplies of stores and ammunition, and that all these operations will still require to be performed at Spithead, in addition to coaling, which will henceforth be not less important." We are reminded that "convoys of more than a hundred sail of merchant vessels at a time have been assembled at Spithead;" and then the difficulty of stopping "by any practicable amount of fire from batteries" the passage of swift steamships dashing past at full speed, is much insisted on, and the object of the defensive works in progress or recommended seems to be not so much to prevent an enemy's cruisers from making a swoop on Spithead altogether, as to make the place too hot for them when there.

A sea attack must come either from the westward, by way of the Needles and the Solent, or from the south-eastward. It would almost require a separate article to give any adequate idea of the defences of the Needles passage, existing, in progress, or about to be constructed. Its natural features have been already alluded to. To these must be added the combined cross and raking fires of extensive batteries at Hurst Castle, on the north, and of no less than six others, lying along the shore, or perched on the cliffs for five miles on the south. A strong boom is also to be placed, in war time, across the narrowest part of the channel, and under the guns of Hurst Castle; and it seems to be considered tolerably certain that no enemy would risk the natural difficulties of the

* It will be well to bear in mind that throughout this paper Portsmouth and Portsea have been invariably mentioned under the first name only. For all purposes of it, they are but one town, and when the alterations shall have been made in their fortifications, will be actually one as well.

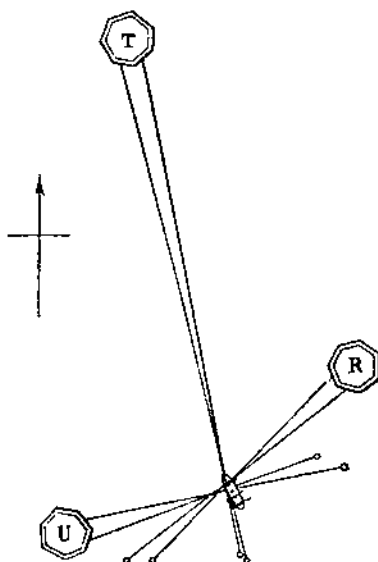
passage, and the damage which must be inflicted in running the gauntlet of so formidable a chain of forts, for the mere sake of scrambling up to Spithead by the Solent, only to find himself, when there, involved in the same kind of difficulties from the cross-fire of sea and land forts, which are next to be described.

Before, however, proceeding to consider the nature of the sea defences at and around Spithead, it will be necessary first of all to take a glance at the map of the sea's bottom, between the mainland and the Wight. The Spit Sand has already been described. Its outlines, as well as those of the other shoals about to be mentioned, are denoted in our engraving by dotted lines. To the eastward of the Spit, there stretches down southward, to a distance of three miles from Southsea Castle, another large shoal called the Horse Sand, with a pendant going off S.E., called the Horse Tail; and though vessels of light draught can—especially at high water—pass across the sand, yet the regular channel, and the only one in which all large ships, lies south of the sand, and of the five black buoys which mark the edge of the shoal. This gets rid at once for all purposes of practical navigation of some three good miles of the space in question—but this is not all. From the opposite shore of the Isle of Wight, a little east of Ryde, a third shoal, called No Man's Land, protrudes itself nearly two miles from shore in a north-easterly direction towards the Horse, its limit marked by a white buoy, distant a little over a mile from the westernmost of the five which mark the Horse, &c.

Through the channel between these five black buoys and one white, every ship of any size must pass, in order to get to Spithead or Portsmouth, and when in the centre of its narrowest part would find the head of the Horse Sand about half-a-mile on its right, No Man's Land about the same distance to the left, and the head of the Spit two miles in front. It should be added, that about three miles further westward, and in mid-channel between Ryde and Gillkicker Point (H), lies another shoal, called Sturbridge.

The scheme of defence now being put in force involves the erection on No Man's Land, the Horse Sand, and Sturbridge, of three large forts; and on the Spit Sand and on the Horse, halfway between the large work and the mainland, of two smaller forts, whilst on shore a string of forts, called Cumberland (N), Eastney (O), and Lump's Forts (P), and Southsea Castle (Q), combine with Point Battery (E), and the southern face of Portsmouth Lines in guarding the eastern approaches to the harbour, the protection of the western being provided for by Block House Fort (F), Fort Monkton (G), and batteries on Gillkicker Point (H), connected by works with the chain of forts west of Gosport, already described. Let us next proceed to consider what obstacles an attack by sea, from the most likely quarter, S.E., would have to encounter, from this system of defences. We will, as in the case of the Thames and Sheerness, imagine ourselves on board one of the attacking squadron. Our course lies past the Warner Light, shown in the right-hand lower corner of the engraving, our guiding marks being the odd-

looking sea mark called the Kickergill, seen on shore abreast of the middle of Stokes Bay (I), as observed over Monkton Fort and the works hard by (H). Without taking much notice of the fact, that before we arrived at the Warner, we should have exposed ourselves to the fire of both Nettlestone Battery (Y), and another a mile to the southward, at St. Helen's Point, but at a two mile range, we should, very soon after passing the Light ship, find ourselves in a position of which the diagram will give the best idea, whilst it at the same



time will serve to elucidate the system of cross firing already treated of. On our right we should find the Horse Sand Fort, opening on us from two of its flanks at once—we are assuming that the number of guns to be mounted on each of the three batteries we are now considering, will be, as set down in the Commissioners' Report, 120—and we are assuming that Captain Sullivan's plan will be adhered to in principle, and that these guns will consequently be mounted in casemated batteries of three tiers with [guns and] mortars on the roof, and we are further assuming that the gallant captain's suggestion will be also attended to in determining the shape of the forts, and that they will be polygonal. From the Commissioners' plan we gather that they will be heptagonal: this will give us about 17 guns to each face. Now, as this construction will always enable two faces at least at a time to bear on any one object, it follows that the Horse Sand Battery will open on us with the fire of no less than four-and-thirty guns of heavy calibre, whilst at the same moment the No Man's Land Fort (U) would pour in a similar fire on our left, and, as we proceeded, the Spit Fort (T) would meet us with a raking fire of the same number of guns—nor would our pushing on briskly with all aid of sails, steam, and tide, avail us much, for as we close one face of the forts we merely open a fresh one, whilst the mortars from the roof would all the while be shelling us with a murderous vertical fire, the most dangerous of all

for shipping—upwards of 100 heavy guns concentrating their fire on us at distances varying from two miles to half-a-mile, to say nothing of the mortars! If our force consists of gunboats of light draught, and we try to push in at high water between the Horse Sand Fort and the Intermediate,* we find ourselves in a precisely similar triangular snarl with these two forts, and that on the Spit. If we run round the back of the Intermediate, all four forts on the shore, Cumberland (N), Eastney (O), Lumps (P), and Southsea (Q), open on us, besides the Intermediate, whilst the inevitable Spit still rakes us in front. If we push for Langston Harbour, in hopes of doing some mischief from thence, we must run the gauntlet of Cumberland Fort at less than 400 yards range, at which distance a single 68-pound shot may sink us, whilst, even if we succeeded in forcing the entrance, the guns of the same fort will continue to rake us as we lie; and, finally, if we try to carry our light-draught vessels round the back of No Man's Land Fort, between that and the shore of the Isle of Wight, Nettlestone Point (Y) and Appley House (X) Batteries will again combine with No Man's Land Fort, to place us in our triangular difficulty, whilst the fort on the Sturbridge shoal will supply the place of the Spit in treating us to a raking fire ahead.

Of course, any attempt to force the entrance of the harbour involves us in running the gauntlet between the fort on the Spit Sand and Southsea Castle, distant just half-a-mile from each other, whilst the whole of our passage down the narrow channel, which leads to the mouth of the harbour, must be effected under a perfect storm of shot and shell from the southern portion of the Portsmouth lines, as well as from Point Battery, Block House Fort, Fort Monckton, and such guns both of the Spit Sand Fort and Southsea as bear towards the harbour, and in the very thickest of this fire we should find ourselves brought up by a chain across the harbour mouth, which had been quietly reposing at the bottom like its more delicate neighbours belonging to the floating bridge, but was hauled up by capstans on each side as soon as we were descried in the offing. This is the legitimate successor of old Leland's "mighty chayne;" only, no doubt, as much mightier a piece of iron work than his, as the forge-house at the Dockyard surpasses the smith's shop of his days.

Here, then, we have as on both land faces the triple line of defences. First, the outlying works, represented by the forts on the sands; next, the second line, consisting of the shore forts; and, lastly, the combination effected by the Portsmouth lines, Point Battery, and Block House Fort.

The possibility of an enemy landing on the Isle of Wight, as a preliminary step to an attack on Portsmouth, has received careful consideration; but it would be impossible within the limits of this paper to follow the Commissioners round the back of the island, and point out, even hurriedly, the details of the system of defence recommended. It must suffice to say, briefly, that every available

spot for a landing is to be fortified by works more or less extensive, according to the size of the opening and the nature of the facilities afforded.

There are two points in connection with these systems of defences, on which it is hardly our province here to touch; one is the time their construction will occupy, the other the expense involved. As regards the first, ground has already been broken on Portedown Hill, and a great portion of the second cordon of defence is actually completed. The forts on the shoals, however, must be a work of time; piles have to be driven first, in spots where, at every high tide, there is more than twenty feet of water, and where occasionally there is a very troublesome jerking sea; and on these have to be erected massive granite forts, strong enough to carry each 120 guns of heavy calibre, to say nothing of mortars which by themselves require beds of extraordinary strength and solidity. As to the expense, we must hand the discussion of that matter over to the eloquent tongue of our Chancellor of the Exchequer. The estimate for Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight is put down at 2,400,000*l*. But what's in an estimate?

THE EMIGRANT ARTIST.

CHAPTER I.

If the companions show the man, and the closest companion a man has been taken as an evidence of the disposition, then was Ulrich Vigaud a man who loved retirement; who hated his face to be seen. His choicest—most frequent companion being the index, he was all this, and more. His pipe was that companion, and was but the reflection—the image—of the man; nowhere was he seen without it, except in the pulpit—there, in the dignity of black cloth and a minister's silk gown, the two were separated. On other days, from morn till night, both were enveloped in smoke. Like to some mountain-top his head was now almost hidden with the thick clouds, betokening deep thought, that might end in a storm of thunder and lightning, such as should shake and terrify his hearers next Sabbath; now the light cirrus, aerial and delicate as a fairy's veil, but half hid the sunny smile of his usually stern face as he watched children at play, and took out the pipe to give them a word of encouragement. Never but on the Sabbath did that crag-like old face, with its cap of snow, appear unclouded. Then he was clearly visible, and right well he looked, as in the high, cramped pulpit, he thundered forth those anathemas which the brooding cumuli of the week had produced.

A much beloved man was Ulrich Vigaud. The clear red light of his pipe-bowl was always the harbinger of good to his flock. They might not see the man, but they saw that, and felt it was the image of his nature, always warm and bright, and when they saw his eyes on Sabbath morn or eve, they knew that the soul within was that of a willing helper and a firm friend.

"Good e'en, Carl; at work as usual?"

"Yes, worthy father, as usual; but I've done now for to-day. Enter."

"Welcome, Father Ulrich," said Bertha Schatz, dusting the arm-chair by the fire, as she spoke.

* There was much talk about closing this interval by a permanent barrier, similar to that behind Cronstadt, but the idea appears to have been abandoned for several weighty reasons.

"Carl, I've come to talk to you. I've a letter from a brother-minister in St. Louis, America, about which I want to speak. Are you ready to hear?"

"Most certainly."

"Bertha, leave us. Take care that the children come not upon us."

"Carl, you are unwise and cruel. Nay, nay, list! Start not away. You are unwise and cruel."

"To whom?"

"To Bertha, your wife,—Fritz and Herman, your children. That man is cruel who gives not to his young ones the means of raising themselves; you do not, you are cruel;—that man is cruel who taxes a woman's strength beyond its proper limit; you do it, and you are cruel;—that man is unwise who makes no provision for his old age; you do not, you are unwise."

"What would you have me do? I'm at work from morning till night, and they will not buy my pictures when I've painted them."

"Therefore, why paint them?"

"In hope. They ought to sell."

"Nay, they ought not to sell, for they are not good; they are not excellent art; and you are not an artist. You have the artist's soul, but you are not an artist. You lack knowledge; you lack that proficiency of hand which only springs from practice begun almost in infancy, or from a genius that knows no law. You began too late in life to succeed."

"I took the prize, though, three years since."

"I know. What did you paint?"

"The view from the hill up yonder, on the left of the town."

"Most true, and whose house was it that was in the view? The Burgomaster's, was it not?"

"Truly."

"And who was the head of the judges to award the prize but Master Wansleben, the Burgomaster? Who bought the picture? Master Wansleben. His house, not your merit, sold the picture—gained the prize. You know yourself that it was not a good picture. Three years' work have taught you that—learn more."

"But what can I do? Bertha's little money is all but spent; I must paint."

"Truly; but not here—not here. I looked in at the window, last evening just before sunset, and saw you all. The old man sitting by the fire stretching out his feeble hand for the poor porridge your Bertha had made for him; Fritz reading his book—he's like your wife, that son of yours; let him not read too much now, he should play. Herman, your youngest, (with his father's feelings, but not his father's skill) was sketching the face of Bertha's mother, as he leaned against her. He holds his pencil badly, does Herman—he has no freedom—you should see to this; had your father done so, I should not have had to tell you what I have. And you, Carl, were painting as usual. I like not to break up this group, but it must be some day. Death will take the old man Teutzel this winter—he must go; I have seen Death before; I know his mark. He will leave you, and you must leave her."

"Her! Whom?"

"Your children's grand-dame, Charlotta Teutzel.

her daughter Bertha; she felt not, saw not, your little Herman last night, though his weight was on her; she is in her second childhood—it may last years, but she is all but dead—you must leave her in my care."

"Thanks, father! but where must I go?"

"If my advice is taken, to St. Louis. I will read what my brother pastor says: 'The young man of whom you speak would, I think, do well out here; wages for the class of labour are high; many of our merchant-princes spend sums almost fabulous in the decorations of their mansions, and eagerly employ artists of talent and taste at good salaries for the purpose. If, as you say, your young friend is not likely to take a high position in his own country as an artist in the highest sense of the term, let him come here at once, for employment is abundant and the wages dependent on his industry alone.'"

"And you," said Carl, "wrote to him of me?"

"I did—for I love you, Carl. Had you been rich, you would have had many friends; but, being poor, your poetic temperament—your artist nature—is to you but the thin garment of a man who treads through a forest of briars, which, while it leaves him sensitive to the gentlest breath of the winds of heaven, is therefore the less protection from the thorns of earth; and your path here, poor Carl, has too many of the thorns: this is neither the climate nor the age when it can be said, 'truly happy are the poor' in anything. You must go."

"I would it could be otherwise, and besides, I have no means to reach this Elysium—this Paradise."

"Despise not the unknown, Carl."

"How shall I get there?"

"Carl, I am not rich, you know well. I hold that the shepherd should spend much for the good of the sheep. I'd rather leave behind me the weeping eyes of friends who held me dear for my help than much wealth. Still I have a little that I had, perhaps faithlessly, laid by should my voice fail; that little shall be yours, for your mother's sake, Carl."

The clouds were thick about him now, and one large drop slowly coursed down his cheek to the ground. It might have been the herald of a storm, but no storm came; if it fell it was in a rain of fire on the heart, there was none outwardly when the clouds cleared away.

"I can hardly accept it, but—"

"But for Bertha's sake, and Fritz's and Herman's sake you will. I'll give you a week to think of it."

It was decided. He would go. Poor Carl! Vanished for him were all the fond dreams of youth. No fame! Her temple doors were shut to him; and henceforth he must live and work, hopeless of her crown.

Carl was not an idle man; he thought much, worked much, but did not get on. He had mistaken his vocation. Alas! how many are in his position—miserable, they know not how; unsuccessful, they know not why; and then drink soon dulls them too much to look for causes, and at last the poor-house or the grave finish the

CHAPTER II.

THE Hamburg packet—an old, wide, uneasy vessel—slowly made her way up the Thames on a spring morning with something short of a hundred emigrants on board. Amongst them were Carl and Bertha.

A few days in London, and the Black Warrior was to sail with a human cargo of some hundreds of German and Irish emigrants from the London Docks. She was a crack ship, was the Black Warrior. "Very sharp forward," said the knowing; "likely to get across in a month."

Babel knew no worse confusion than the decks of the Black Warrior on the fine May morning that saw Carl, his wife, and their children on the pier-head of the London Docks.

"Those Dutchmen coming aboard, Captain?" said the hoarse-voiced mate.

"Yes, by G—, and two hundred and fifty others, too. I saw the boarding-house keeper, and he said they'd be here at nine: that's them coming in at the gate, now."

"Barge alongside, sir, with luggage."

"Mr. Smith, rig out a tackle on the larboard side; get those boxes in; we shall miss this tide, if you don't look sharp."

And now came Babel's parody; what with the lowing of cows; the hee-haw of donkeys; the agonized squalling of pigs; the bleating of sheep; the hoarse cries of the men at the capstan getting the anchor over the side; the shriller, quicker, voices of the men getting in the boxes, "hand over



hand;" the blowing-off of the tug just outside; the farewells of the Irish, in a high key; the growlings of the English in a low key; and the guttural babbling of the Germans in no key at all,—there was noise enough to furnish one with an indistinct notion of the nature of the vocal accompaniments to the drama of "The Perplexed Builders."

At last it's over; the ropes out; the Black Warrior is fairly out of dock, and the customary three cheers by the crew are mingled with the feeble "Heep, heep, heep, you rar" of a few of the imitative German enthusiasts on board, while country and home are forgotten in the general scramble for best berths.

The Germans establish themselves in one quarter, while a mixed colony of English and Irish appropriate another; and for the delicately minded

English there is a separate portion for the married and families, the partition being a lattice-work of boards, three inches wide and three inches apart; but then shawls are very good curtains at night-fall, and there's no interruption of the current of air during the day.

The Germans, who manage without partitions, are tolerably soon, and well, employed in devouring black bread and sausages, both from their appearance, hair-looks, for sustenance on special occasions; special now, because nothing else will be obtained, till, as the mate observes, they are "a little to rights."

Past Gravesend; past the Nore; and night shuts out the view.

"Carpenter, see those Dutchmen put those lights out at eight o'clock."

"Aye, aye, sir." And from eight o'clock to

daylight, the only lights are a few smoky lamps, locked, and hung from the deck over-head.

Carl and Bertha are fortunate—a couple of berths, one over the other, and close to the hatchway, are a possession to be prized, with more than three hundred people sleeping in the “tween decks” of the *Black Warrior*.

A few days, and all the signs of sickness are gone, and the decks are crowded with men smoking and girls knitting all day long. Carl and Bertha felt as they had never felt before. To be associated with those semi-savages of their own land, they had, at first, deemed insupportable; but they soon found that hearts are like hearts, all the world over. A dozen willing hands, dirty though they were, would be eagerly stretched out to hold little Victor, while she prepared the meals; and though they were dirty and poor, they were honest in their poverty—ay, and grateful to Bertha for her small distributions, from her somewhat better store, of food to their sick.

All the men liked Carl, and though he was none of them, as they said, he would sketch their children's portraits, and sometimes play a game of cards with themselves, too.

Fritz spent his time chiefly in reading novels, of which a German cabin-passenger had a large store, while every flat surface on every part of the vessel—from the anchor-stocks to the lids of the water-casks—bore traces in chalk or charcoal of Herman's attempts. True it was that in most of his portraits the noses were a little enlarged; still he was a young artist, and never happy without his chalk; so they let him alone.

Victor was hugged, kissed, and fed to an extent that few babies ever were, before or since, and bore it with the native phlegm of his country.

CHAPTER III.

At length the voyage was over.

One morning, after some five weeks of this life, a small cloudy speck was seen on the horizon.

“Guess that's a tow-boat. Mr. Smith, take a glass up into the top and see, sir.”

A tow-boat it was; they were soon alongside.

“How is it this time?” said the Captain to a small dark man who had his den on a deck between the paddles and level with their tops, and who went into a perpetual series of convulsions with a large wheel before him.

“Very bad—hundreds a-day.”

“Don't say so.”

“Guess I do, though. The Owens is full now—regular gang at the cemetery on the Shell-road—at it all day—steamers all full.”

This information was conveyed in small detachments, and accompanied by convulsive struggles with the wheel and puffs at a cigar.

“There'll be no room in the Owens for the lot you'll bring: got many? What sort, Dutch?”

“Yes, nearly all Dutch; a few Irish—about 350 total.”

“Well, it's mighty bad, new comers drop off like sheep. It's worse now, I guess, than when I left, for I've been down here these three days looking out.”

“You won't wait for anything else?”

“Guess I shall. I sighted a small brig after you.

I'll wait for her and tow you both; there's water enough on the bar, and I can spare a few hours.”

In due time the small brig came, and the convulsed allowed some other convulsed cigar-smoker to undergo his torture.

It was discovered by a thoughtful German that these convulsions had some connection with the vessel's movement, but whether the progressive or the directional he could not at first discover, though he came to the conclusion that it was the latter, after more mature thought.

“Come aboard, Captain!”

“Well! guess, I will now.”

“Mister Lomax, you'll keep her a little clear of the buoy on the starboard; there's a snag there I saw coming down; I forgot it till now.”

The active convulsed promised compliance, and continued his agonies till he was superseded once more by his companion, and in some few hours more they reached New Orleans. Here they were boarded by a city officer, who notified to the affrighted cargo, that as the yellow fever was raging, it was the advice of the mayor that those who were going up the country should go to Algiers, the opposite side of the river, and wait the departure of the steam packets.

Carl and Bertha therefore went there, and for a whole week waited patiently. At last the steamer came,—just room for Carl and his party in one of the small steerage cabins at the back of the paddle-wheels. They took the berths, and went on board. Under the grand saloon stretched a long row of bunks for emigrants, with scarcely room to stand upright; there was but the thickness of a board between the squalid poverty from the old world and the ostentatious wealth of the new. On that hot July day the air was suffocating, and glad enough they were to get to their little cabin, through the chinks of which they could see the great wheel with the water dripping from its floats, as though it too laboured and sweated under the hot sun.

“Mister Burke, there's the owner on the ferry signing you—he means ‘stop.’”

The owner came on board, and called the captain on one side.

“Captain Burke, I was drunk last night: I made a bet that this boat would be at St. Louis before the Belle Isle—she must be there.”

“Can't he dono, sir. The Belle Isle was off this morning at seven o'clock, and it's now three. Besides, we're deep. They've got next to nothing but passengers on the Belle Isle. Can't be done, sir.”

“Captain Burke, my bet's a big one: I made it when I was drunk; I must stick to it. I'll give you 500 dollars if she's there before the other, if it's only by a minute. I'll allow what wood bill you like; burn plenty of knots; and, Captain, there's a new craft building at Natchez for us; you shall have her, if you manage this.”

“I can't do it, sir; these boilers won't stand it; ask the pilots.”

“Boy, tell Mr. Marbleman and Mr. Garspin they're wanted.”

“Oh, and send Mr. Farr; he knows more about the boilers than they do,” muttered Captain Burke. The two pilots and the engineer came at once.

"Gentlemen," said the owner, "this boat must be at St. Louis before the Belle Isle, if it's only by a minute. 200 dollars a piece, gentlemen, if it's done; if it's not—well, gentlemen, I shall be sorry, very sorry—for if it's not, gentlemen, you'll have no more out of E. T. C. Crusset; he'll be a gone coon—done, licked holler—gone to the Owens, gentlemen."

"If the boilers will stand, I could do it," said one of the pilots; "but they're old, and ought to have been looked to well this time."

"Boilers or not, gentlemen, it's to be done! I called at the Atlas this morning, and insured a lot of cases for a hundred times their value, and that may do for another throw if you do go down; they're common red crockery, well packed with straw. I've insured them as New York goods. If they don't have to pay, I paid a heavy premium, and find I've shipped the wrong goods and get part back; and they can't grumble; if they do have to pay, they won't know it, for the cases will be in the river; and you, gentlemen, know New Orleans too well to 'blow' on me, I know. In short, I mean it to be done."

"But the passengers know the boat as well as we do."

"D—n the passengers; if you don't know how to stop their clamour, what the devil is this for in your waistcoat?" It looked most suspiciously like the stock of a revolver.

"Very well, sir, it shall be done, if it's possible—if it must be done."

"It must. Send the clerk here."

"Mr. Walker, you'll take the money for all the passengers as soon as you leave this. Don't keep it on board; pay it in to my account as you get it—as you go up. Pay your wood bill in orders on me, here. Good day, sir. Pleasant trip."

"Precious fool! That last bottle of Champagne may cost me that vessel and 50,000 dollars. I'll take to claret like a fog for the future. I must send that silk dress to Mrs. Crichton—she'll make it all right with the Atlas secretary."

The owner gone, there was all haste to get the vessel away. Fires shone brightly, and the long sigh of the steam, as it escaped up the funnels, mingling with the roar of the paddles, saddened beyond all power of utterance the hearts of Bertha and her husband.

Mile after mile of low, damp ground, so alike, that only a practised eye could detect that the vessel moved;—for there was no change of scene sufficient to indicate it; then some small villages passed; then a large belt of timber reaching away as far as the eye could see; then the long night, broken by the glare of torches and the shouting of men as they brought the wood on board; then silence; then the hot, still day, and the almost hotter night, and the fever on board. Carl first—the headache, the nausea, the languor, and Carl was down; then Bertha followed. Both down with that awful scourge, the yellow fever.

Some good woman took Fritz and Herman away, and waited on Carl and Bertha in their cabin as if they had been her children. Then the poor baby died, and in a remission of the fever they had hope the worst was over; she seemed so

much better, she begged them to leave the child with her until the morning at least. They did.

The night was calm, and still as death; the stars seemed balls of fire; the air was as clear as ether—it obscured nothing; the fire-flies on the low ground could be seen from the vessel's deck. So passed the night. The morning came.

The black waiters were arranging the last articles of the breakfast; the passengers, one by one, were dropping in out of their state rooms; the Captain was impatiently striding up and down the carpet, when the carpenter entered.

"Well, carpenter, how are we below?"

"Rather bad, sir."

"Any gone?"

"Yes; three."

"Ah! Who?"

"That Dutchman and his wife who joined at Algiers, and took one of the wheel cabins."

"What, both?"

"Yes, sir. It's a queer sight, too. She's sitting up in the bunk, holding the baby, and looking at him, and he's kneeling on the ground and looking up at her. It's a queer sight, it is, too; they're all three dead. I left 'em in case you'd like to see 'em."

"No; I don't care about it," said Captain Burke. Some of the passengers went, however.

"Have they paid, Mr. Walker?"

"Rather, sir. I saw he was down, and knew if she stuck so close to him she'd have it too; so I made 'em pay up in case of accidents: saves trouble afterwards, you know."

"What shall I do, sir?"

"Oh, make separate cases for them."

"For the young 'un, sir?"

"I don't know—heave it overboard; there's no law against it for babies like that, that I know."

"No, no, Massa Burke, dat ain't done on dis yer boat. I se knowed dis yer beat eber since she fust come on de river, and de like of dat's neber been done afore. No, Massa Burke, dat ere chile's buried like a Christian, if I know anythink."

"Don't put yourself out, steward."

"No, Massa Burke, I no put myself out. I has dat ere chile buried proper; if not, I se no nigger of yours, you know; more's dese oders either," said the excited steward, pointing to a line of black faces of his assistants, "Aire ye, boys?"

A sound of assent followed. "We're oo niggers of yours; and guess if you don't give dat ere chile burial, we go ashore on the bluff, we do."

"All right, steward," said the amused captain, "you shall do what you like. Carpenter, make a separate case. Is it to be a separate one, steward, for the child?"

"Yes, Massa, sep'rate coffin for dat infant."

"Please, sir, the pilot wants to see you in the wheel-house."

"Is that her?"

"Get the glass," said the pilot.

"That's her, sure enough; she's going, too; but we shall be over her to-day, if she don't look out. I'll tell Mr. Farr to see those fires well kept up now. I've saved a lot of knots for the race from last wooding."

Now came a struggle; the Belle Isle was a-head but a few miles, and it was a race for stakes

worth winning. How the fires roared till the sparks formed a thick continuous shower in broad daylight, as they piled on the gnarled pine knots. How quickly the steam sighed away its strength as the two boats neared; and, amid the roar of fires, the sighing of the steam, and the tinkling of the bells of the engine-room, there was one sound clearly distinguishable—the slow, steady blows of the hammer on those three coffins. How the fair girl in the white dress played the piano to drown a little of that sound—how loudly the men talked—and spite of it all, it came in as a refrain to everything: the music and the beat, the jest of the light and the talk of the serious, had the same chorus. And so it is in the world. Some of us hear that sound through a long life, and know what it means as well as they did there.

Towards evening they had passed the Belle Isle, and a long screech of the whistle indicated the triumph.

"We shall have to wood before night," said the clerk to Captain Burke: "can't get another ten miles out of her with what we've got."

"I should like to get round this bend while we're all hot. See what there is, twenty miles will do."

The clerk returned, and reported that twenty might be done.

"That will do."

And the twenty were done. About ten o'clock the oft-repeated cry was heard, "Wood pile there—wood pile there—all hands rouse out." Slowly the tired firemen and crew moved to the forepart of the vessel, which was steering to a small speck of light on the bank, that gradually, as she neared, became brighter.

"Now then, lads, put that plank out," said the mate, as the vessel was within a few yards of the shore. The long plank was put over the side, and while five or six men stood on the one end, a man with a line ran lightly over it, and jumped ashore.

"Light up on that bawser, boys;—make fast now that bridge!" And thirty strong arms thrust ashore a wide plank.

The furnace-doors were opened, and the red glare was almost lost in the moonlight.

"Watchman! where are those lights?"

"Here, sir." And in a moment a basket of blazing pine-knots shed its light on the scene.

"Pick it up, boys,—pick it up,—pick up that wood!" was the cry of the mate, as one by one the men ran across the narrow plank from the vessel to the shore and returned with their load of logs across the wide plank from the shore to the vessel.

"Got much more?" said the captain.

"Only a few cord."

"Make some of those Dutchmen pick up those cases and take them ashore."

"Captain Burke," whispered the pilot, "she's just shot past the bend. She is going, and no mistake."

There could be none; the funnels of the defeated Belle Isle were pouring forth their fierce volumes of flame, while the sharp quick snort of the engines told that those on board did not yet believe themselves beaten.

"Now, steward, if you want any tomfooleries over those cases, look sharp, there's only ten minutes for you."

"All right, Massa Burke," said the steward, "I'm gwine d'reckly," and he bustled down amongst the crowd of Germans on the forward part of the vessel to marshal them in proper order, his shining black hat decorated for the solemn occasion with a streamer,—the shawl of the stewardess.

"Now, you four; you take dat ere big case,—dat's him; you four take dat middlin' case,—dat's her. Now, you two boys, you come here; take dat little case,—dat's it; picanniny—poor picanniny. Now ready?"

What a strange scene it was as the long procession, led by the tall black steward, wended its way along the plank under which the water flowed fast, like a stream of molten metal. The three deal cases, too, might have been treasure-chests of costly red velvet, they looked so rich in the ruddy light of the pine-torches (perhaps they were treasure-chests); and then the long train of mourning countrymen who, in all varieties of costume, followed behind in a confused crowd; and over all the pale moon shedding a softening light that made the whole look unreal—a dream, not a sad reality.

"Oh! Captain Burke! Do have a fire put on the branch of that tree, it will light it up so beautifully."

"Well, Miss, I'll do it; but pine-knots just now is worth something. Watchman, put—"

"Oh, never mind, they've lighted a torch to read by."

And so they had. There, standing round three shallow graves—*shallow and separate*, for the Brown Bear must reach St. Louis before the Belle Isle—stood the crowd. The steward, with a face black as sable, reading part of the burial service amid the sobs of women and the hushed grief of the men, and above them from the branches of the trees, hung the long festoons of Spanish moss, looking black in the mingled lights as if Death held a festival, and decked the woods with his garlands. "Dust to dust," and a few shovelfuls of earth were put on each.

"Now, steward, get your gang aboard, will you? or by God I'll leave some of you behind."

"Ay, you'll have to, she's not half-a-mile astern now, and our fires won't draw up for some ten minutes or so."

"Now, all hands aboard, and fire up there!" and once more the sparks rushed in clouds along the air.

"Will you come aboard, steward, or shall I leave you?"

"Comin', Massa Burke, comin'," and he hurried the crowd before him. On they came like so many frightened sheep, and in a few seconds but one man was left on the shore.

"All aboard?"

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Go a-head a little to take the strain off that bawser!" roared the mate. "That'll do; haul aboard, lads!"

The man let go the rope, jumped on the projecting plank, and all were aboard. The pilot let the stream carry her a little way down to the deep water, and then once more the race began—to end, who cares how?

The two boys were taken care of by their

countrymen on board, and then the worthy minister at St. Louis took charge of them; but they sometimes miss, even in all his kindness, the tenderness of their mother, Bertha, and the fond sympathy of their father, Carl; and regret

bitterly that, when asked of their father and mother, they can only say: "They were German Emigrants, and were buried on the banks of the Mississippi,"—as how many have been and are still to be!

A. STEWART HARRISON.

WON!



A start—a pause—a flutter and a sigh,
A voice that trembles in the common greeting;
The hurried clasp of an unready hand,
That once was frankly offered at your meeting.

I saw you, little Annie—yes, I know,
He's Charlie's friend, just landed from Bengal,
He's very fond of Charlie, ah! and so
He stay'd till last at Charlie's sister's ball.

You danced eight times together—am I right
"He's such a perfect waltzer"—nothing more?
You met a week ago this very night,
And I have—known you all your lifetime o'er!

Forgive me that I played the list'ner, dear,
And heard him win your love, amongst your flowers;

You had forgotten I was prisoned here,
A poor lone cripple all these festive hours.

He's very winsome, honest-eyed, and tall,
The cross for valour's roll contains his story.
On my pain-stricken brow no wreath will fall,
I reap in life's grim battle all but glory.

Dearest, don't kneel, and hide those kind grey eyes,
I am not grieving, look me in the face.
Why, who am I, that I should claim the prize,
Who never could have started in the race?

He's waiting for you, Annie—leave me now
Alone with what must be a happy past.
A brother's kiss I claim upon your brow,
God bless you, Annie, 'tis my first—and last.

A. F.

LAST WEEK.

THE intelligence from Italy has almost become wearisome, because day after day the telegraph brings us little more than scraps of foregone conclusions. Victor Emmanuel was to enter Naples—the young Bourbon Francis was to quit Gaëta: the first of these events has come to pass—the other, not. The troops who a week ago were still numbered as adherents of the falling king, during the last seven days have been gradually passing over to the Italian side. The French admiral, who at first had opposed himself to the operations of the Sardinian fleet, after having consulted his oracle at Paris, has ceased to hamper its officers with threats and demonstrations. The drag-net is drawn closer and closer around Gaëta, and in all probability by the time this number of our publication is delivered to the reader, the fallen sovereign will have perceived the uselessness of further resistance, and will have taken his final departure from the kingdom which he and his father so grievously misgoverned. So far it is well; but during the LAST WEEK the eyes of all Englishmen have been turned not only to the other side of the Atlantic, but upon the broad surface of the Atlantic itself. Our young Prince, the heir to the proud sceptre of the British Isles, had been lingering somewhat too long upon his homeward road. There had been, it could scarcely be called, anxiety about him—for reason and experience told us that there was no real cause for apprehension—but at least we should gladly have seen him back amongst us once more. The feeling was honourable to the nation, and to the Sovereign who has discharged the duties of the Royal office in so gracious and temperate a manner, that any anxiety which might have fallen upon her was felt as though it intimately concerned every private household in the land. There was far more in this than mere adulation of the Porphyrogeniti, for it is much to be doubted if many Englishmen, not being actually connected with the Court, would have very seriously disquieted themselves about the sorrows of old Queen Charlotte. The Lady who now sits upon the throne of the Three Kingdoms may fairly reckon upon the love of her subjects, for she has deserved it. She has not only played her own part well, but she has brought up her children in a way which will fit them to discharge the duties of their station; so that, in England at least, loyalty will not be a feeling of by-gone centuries. The greatest concern was everywhere expressed for Queen Victoria—it was almost worth while that she should have endured those few days of suspense, that she might know how strong was the feeling of personal attachment to herself throughout these islands, independently of mere political considerations.

The southerly gale of Wednesday se'nnight, and the telegraph of last Thursday, have put an end to the public solicitude and the private apprehension. The young Prince is back again in the country which one day—may it be a far distant one!—he will be called upon to govern. But how about those lumbering war-steamers, which, upon trial made, turn out to be no steamers at all, but

just the old frigates and line-of-battle ships, with a skuttle of coals on board to be used in case of dire emergency? Not so had we understood the matter, although of course we ought so to have understood it. The long continued easterly gales of this November will have done us good service after all—although at the Prince of Wales's expense—by proving to us that despite of all our mechanical improvements, and all our outlay, we have not as yet succeeded in getting a steam fleet, but only a fleet which can be used as such for a brief space—and at critical moments. Our task is not yet accomplished—we can scarcely be said to have entered upon it. Whatever the truth may be as to this or that particular form of iron-clad vessel, or as to what may be the preferable lines upon which our war-steamers should be laid down for the future, there can be no doubt that we are but just entering upon the scientific epoch of ship-building. With our unbounded command of iron and coal, with our ascertained superiority in engineering skill, and with the longest purse in our hands, it will be strange, indeed, if we do not keep easily a-head of our rivals. If the British sailor ruled the broad seas in former days, the British engineer must do so in days to come. If under such conditions, and with such means at our disposal, we do not hold our own against the world, we deserve our fate.

This visit of the young English Prince to the United States has been made at no ordinary period either of the world's history or of the history of the States. How is it in all our difficulties—how is it in all their difficulties—that we, the subjects of the British Queen, and they, the citizens of that wonderful confederation of Republics, do not perceive that the best and wisest policy for us both lies in close and cordial union? If we would measure the advantageous consequences which would follow from such an union, not only to all who speak with British tongue on either side of the Atlantic—but to the whole human race—we have but to consider the inevitable results of hostilities between Great Britain and the United States. These would be nothing less than the total extinction of political liberty throughout the world. The principle of military despotism, as put in practice upon the continent of Europe, would, for a time at least, be imposed upon mankind. Where in Europe at the present moment, save in the British Islands, is freedom of thought upon political subjects to be found? Is it in France? ask M. Berryer,—ask all the great statesmen and writers of the Orleans dynasty who have been reduced to silence under the iron rule of the present Emperor! Or is it in Austria, where a free thought, if expressed but in a whisper, is an overt act of high treason against the Hapsburgs? Is it in that miserable Prussia, where human beings, under the vain fictitious of constitutional forms, are ticketed, and labelled, and registered, and handled like botanical specimens in a *hortus siccus*? Is it in Spain, where political life might be regarded as dead altogether, if it were not that every cown and then a military *émeute* takes place at Madrid, and one general is ousted, and another takes his place, whilst the Sovereign majestically

continues her calm prodigality without reference to the Ins or the Outs, or who may be lying dead yonder about the Puerta del Sol? Is it in Russia—the traditional land of serfdom—where the Czar is at once Despot and High Priest, and where the only question which, at the present moment, is seriously agitating the minds of men, is whether or no the bulk of the rural population shall be slightly elevated above the status of mere cattle? Let us say it—for we have the right to say it—England is the only country in Europe in which the lamp of freedom still burns with undiminished light. Even in the new Italian kingdom—in which we see such promise for the future—there would be total darkness within a few weeks, if the vote given, and to be given, by England amongst the nations, was annulled. How is it, then, that smaller matters (such, for example, as the question about the Island of San Juan, with which the name of General Harney has been so discreditably involved) should ever be allowed to imperil relations which, for the sake of mankind, if not for the immediate benefit of the two nations, ought never to be in doubt for one moment? Presuming a perfect accord and harmony of political sentiments between Great Britain and her Australian colonies, the Canadas, and the United States of North America, should such an Alliance as this fear, for one moment, all that could be done by a world in arms? Of course, diplomatic traditions, and dynastic considerations, stand in the way upon our own side of the Atlantic; and upon the other there are the first upheavings of a young nation which is just becoming conscious of its own strength, and a kind of robust contempt for the old political experience of Europe. The best thing that could happen to us both would be to be forced into united action for a common object, and the certain result, as we hope, would be that we should be better understood by our Transatlantic friends. At the present moment they seem to be engaged in the consideration of a problem, the solution of which, in a rational sense, concerns us all; it is nothing more nor less than, whether or no, the confederation which was the work of Washington and of the great civil champions of the revolutionary war, shall be dissolved.

It is the old bone of contention which is cast down upon the floor every four years for American politicians to growl and wrangle over which has given rise to the present dispute. How is it possible that the North American Confederation should ever stand upon a secure or settled basis as long as the opinions of the different states are divided upon the subject of SLAVERY? It must not be supposed that the consideration of this great topic is, in the States, remitted to the mere Philanthropists. The Northern States with reference to Slavery constitute one vast Exeter Hall. As long as we by our cruisers, by our denunciations, by the tongues of our orators, and the pens of our writers, maintained an unceasing crusade against the "domestic institution," so long, even in the Northern States, did the feeling of irritated patriotism prevail over the belief that the maintenance of slavery was a heinous blot upon the national escutcheon. When we desisted from our well-intended but irrational endeavours,

the still small voice was heard in place of the broad-sides of our cruisers and the abuse of our Philanthropists, and the burghers of New York and Boston took the matter in hand upon their own account. How they have sped we know well enough by the accounts we have received from beyond the great sea during the last fifteen years. Until the present moment the South has been triumphant. The Southerners have compelled the Northerners to act as policemen, and to return to them their runaway slaves. There has been the decision in the highest courts of law upon the Dred Scott case. There has been the extension of slavery from territory to territory, in direct defiance of an arrangement made many years ago, and which was supposed to be a permanent settlement of the question. There have been the sanguinary measures of repression employed the other day when, as it was supposed, a servile war had been set on foot in one of the slave-holding provinces. Northern members of either House of the Legislature who had made themselves conspicuous on the Slavery question have been openly attacked by the Southerners, not with words merely, but with blows—and that in the very chambers where freedom of speech and thought should have been preserved inviolate. All that real ability, and blackguardism still more real, could accomplish to maintain the South as the governing power in the Union has been tried, and until the present moment with signal success: but now the unnatural strain has given way, and the Northern Provinces in their turn have asserted their right to make their voices heard upon the great subject which has for so long a time been agitating the minds of all citizens of the United States. The return move upon the part of the southern states to this apparent triumph has been a threat of the dissolution of the Union.

Now it is scarcely credible that, under any circumstances, this threat should be carried into execution; and it would be a great calamity to mankind in general, and to these islands in particular, if such should be the case. Without reference to the serious inconvenience which would follow to us from an interruption in the supply of cotton, and regarding the point upon broader grounds even than those which affect the welfare of our own manufacturing districts, we, in England, require for the maintenance of our present influence in Europe, that the North American Confederation should be united and strong. England has not struck a blow for Italy, but Italian independence is largely the work of England. In the same way, without requiring that the States should give us national support, we derive an enormous accession of strength from the mere fact that so important a portion of the earth's surface is inhabited by a race of men who could not in any way, in last resort, be induced to throw in their lot with the military despots of continental Europe. If North America were blotted from the map of the world, we and our colonists must stand alone. Possibly, with the help of insurrectionary movements in the various continental countries, we might come off victorious in the contest; but it is an experiment which one would rather not see tried. It is not very probable that this threat of a

dissolution of the Union will amount to much more than the ordinary menace of our own more infuriated politicians in former days to move the stoppage of the supplies. Such a measure was of course possible; but before it came to that, something—most commonly the mover's courage—gave way. One would with difficulty admit the conclusion that the whole population of the slaveholding States—being a slender majority—would be willing to accept the task of keeping down the slaves—being a vast majority—by their own unassisted efforts. A servile war, to be waged by the masters under very unfavourable conditions, would be the well-nigh inevitable result. The fuel to keep the fire alight is there in abundance. Who can doubt that, if animosity between the Northerners and Southerners were carried to an extreme point, but the Northern hands would be ready to apply the match? On the whole, it would seem to be the most fortunate thing that could happen to the Union, that the election of Mr. Lincoln should be carried, if only because it will then be ascertained that a Northern President, elected upon non-slavery principles, cannot by a scratch of his pen bring about the ruin of the Southern provinces; and because the Southerners will discover by experience that their threat of carrying a dissolution of the Union, unless their ideas are accepted without one jot of abatement, falls upon deaf ears. Northern statesmen will end by saying, "We dare not ruin the South." Southern statesmen will be compelled to add, "Nor dare we recommend a separation between the North and the South."

There has been very little done or said as yet in the way of practical suggestions for the abolition or modification of existing arrangements with regard to slavery; but there can be no reason why slavery should not be confined within its actual limits with a view to its total extinction at a future day. As yet the effort has been to extend slavery into freshly acquired territories, which would in due course be hardened into states, and so claim a voice in the supreme legislature, because it is deemed necessary to obtain fresh votes in order to secure the predominance of the South over the North. The necessity for this ceasing, the necessity for the indefinite extension of slavery would also cease in the eyes of Southern politicians, and events would be allowed to take their natural course. There has been a vast amount of party feeling—an exaggerated apprehension of an untried future—in the course hitherto adopted by the Southerners. Let a Northern and anti-slavery President try his hand at the solution of this terrible problem for the next four years, and the slave owners will probably discover that they have little to apprehend from this change in the *personnel* of the supreme administration. After all, we Englishmen can play very effectually into the hands of the anti-slavery party in the Northern States of the American Union if we exert all our energies to procure supplies of cotton from British India, from Africa, or elsewhere. The real way to run the slave owner to the wall is to meet him, and beat him in the open markets of the world. If

powder—we have tried philanthropy—but in vain. As far as theology is concerned, the slave-owners twist Scripture to their purpose, and almost twist us with irreligion because we have liberated the slaves in our own West Indian Islands. For sixty years every effort has been tried by us to abolish slavery. The young Prince of Wales who has just returned from the States—having caught the barest glimpses of the fringe of the system at Richmond—can tell with what result. Surely our philanthropists must admit that sixty years constitute a long period in the world's history, and this period has been given to them; but as far as the North American Union is concerned, the slavery question is in a worse condition than when they first took the matter in hand. It is needless to say that we should rejoice to see the day when the States of the North American Union have purged themselves of this national crime. Until this is done, American liberty is of so dubious a character, that it is scarcely worth talking about it.

It is pleasant to turn from a country, even though it be one with which all our sympathies are bound up by community of language, of religion, of race, but upon which rests so direful a stain, to another which is shaking off chains as heavy as those which ever oppressed the poor negro's limbs. It is something to have lived to see the independence of Italy all but consummated, and to feel that, if life be spared but a short while longer, the consummation will be achieved. Victor Emmanuel has now taken possession of Southern Italy. He is accepted by the all but unanimous voice of the Neapolitan nation, as he was accepted before by Central Italy. No doubt there is a considerable amount of personal sympathy for the King—and he deserves it—for it must never be forgotten that, whereas all other Italian patriots—even when we include amongst them the pure and glorious name of Joseph Garibaldi—only played their lives, Victor Emmanuel threw a crown and sceptre on the board, and dared to stake the Royal condition of his family, that he might throw for the independence of Italy. This was the movement of a great and magnanimous heart. People say that his head is not equal to his heart; but this is the stereotyped form of reproach against every Italian who does not contrive to hit off the precise view for the moment of our public writers and speakers. At least he has had the discretion to choose his counsellors wisely, and when one reflects upon the enormous blunders which a man in the position of Victor Emmanuel might have committed, and upon the fact that he has not committed any blunder at all (except the enforced cession of Nice and Savoy be one), it must be admitted that he has not done so badly after all. Louis Napoleon has made mistakes in the Italian business. Francis Joseph of Austria has made enormous mistakes—so has the Pope—so has the ex-King of Naples—so has the Grand Duke of Tuscany—so has the Duke of Modena—but where is Victor Emmanuel's blunder? It is very possible that the downright diplomacy has been the work of Count Cavour; but even if this be so, he is no ordinary Sovereign who, during such troublous times, had the good sense to

select the ablest adviser, and to stand or fall by his decisions. It was no slight enterprise to exchange the sovereignty of Piedmont and Sardinia for the sovereignty of the Italian Peninsula, and yet Victor Emmanuel has accomplished this task. There is the more reason that this should be remembered at the present moment, because so bright a lustre surrounds the name of our Italian Patriot, that the deserts of others may be lost sight of, if not forgotten. True, Victor Emmanuel is not Joseph Garibaldi, but he is a brave soldier, and a true lover of his country. All things considered, it is very doubtful if the Italians could have found a better leader for the present movement. A man of daring and aggressive genius—one cast in the mould of the Bonaparte family—would have aroused the suspicions and fears of Europe; but every one knows that Victor Emmanuel's imagination does not run riot beyond the true Italian boundaries. He may yet have a dispute to settle with the Pope, and a final argument with the young Austrian Emperor; but when these matters are concluded in a satisfactory way, Italy has work enough before her for a couple of generations, without entertaining designs upon the territories of her neighbours. It is a country which, after a term of military trials, must be guided in the long run by the maxims of constitutional government—could there be a fitter man for either contingency than Victor Emmanuel? He has shown himself a valiant man in war, and in peace he is content to be guided by the advice of responsible ministers. Italy could better spare a better man.

LAST WEEK, however, has produced a really notable event, in the temporary retirement of Garibaldi from active service. The event is scarcely one which we ought to regret, either for his own sake, or that of Italy. It was not fit that such a man should be mixed up with the ordinary business and ordinary intrigues of public life. He is the man to step forward in great public emergencies, and to represent the heroism and fortitude of the nation. Whilst Garibaldi lives, Italy has a great chief—a leader whom all would follow in days of public difficulty and danger. Of course the instruments to be employed for winning and maintaining the independence of any country must be regularly trained troops, resting upon citadels and arsenals. These, however, are not sufficient in themselves, for the young Austrian Emperor has legions at his disposal, trained to martial exercises and perfect in discipline. Why have they been beaten? Why do their leaders shrink from bringing them again into the field? Simply because their heart is not in their work, and because when they are ranged in line of battle the only motives which induce them to struggle for victory are the soldier's instincts and the natural human desire to save their own lives. There is a great difference between martial ardour of this class and the divine frenzy which fills a man's breast when he is struggling to preserve everything that makes life worth having, and when he knows that it is a less misery to perish than to fail in his attempt. Garibaldi represents this patriotic principle; and should matters take an untoward turn—which seems improbable enough—he is in himself

a future insurrection. It will be found, in days to come, that the popular voice—in this respect just enough—will select Garibaldi from amongst all those who have borne a share in this great Italian struggle, and name him pre-eminently as his country's champion. This man's deeds will justify the choice.

There was nothing so very remarkable in the fact that the highly trained divisions of the French army should have beaten the Austrians in the field; and at any rate, since Louis Napoleon has exacted the price of the service, the less said about magnanimity the better. When France talks about "gratitude," Italy can talk about "Savoy." France preferred gratitude in a material form, and she has got it. The Central Italians saw their rulers fly away, and no one in particular was the hero of the hour, because the circumstances of the case were not such as to call heroism into play. Victor Emmanuel, with his Generals and his Statesmen to back him, has done wonders; but what he has done has all been done with the help of great armies, and of the usual instruments of success. Besides, independently of the means at his disposal, in the crown of Italy Victor Emmanuel will receive a great reward for all that he has risked, and all that he has gained.

But look at the case of Joseph Garibaldi by the side of any or all of these! With a very few followers he lands in Sicily, and fairly tears the island from the grasp of the Bourbon king. He crosses to the mainland, enters the capital of the Neapolitan sovereign, and assumes the government of the kingdom. With such raw levies as he can get together, and backed by the devotion and enthusiasm, rather than by the military skill, of his followers, he holds the disciplined army of the legitimate sovereign in check, and finally defeats it in a great battle under the walls of Capua. He continues to beleague the city until a Piedmontese division reaches the ground; and upon the general of that division, from political considerations, and not because the triumph was his own, devolves the duty of receiving the surrender of the citadel. Having done all this, Garibaldi did something more. He directed that machinery should be organised for testing the real wishes of the Neapolitan people upon the question of the annexation to Northern Italy, and, when this was done, he calmly handed over the fruits of his own perils and triumphs to another. *Sic vos nov cobis.* The name of Joseph Garibaldi will take its place in history by the side of that of George Washington. Where can a third be found?

And now his task is done—and yet not done. Garibaldi has retired to his little rocky islet in the Straits of Bonifazio; and, unless Italy should again claim his life, and his sword, there he will be content to remain. One or two questions, however, must be finally settled, or he will speedily reappear upon the scene. Whilst a priest holds temporal power in Italy, or an Austrian soldier remains in Venetia, Garibaldi's task is not at an end. He himself has strongly expressed his own consciousness of this when he proclaimed it in his last address before leaving the scene of his last triumphs—"By next spring, if Italy would be free, let her show 1,000,000 men under arms!"